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THE COMPLETE SIXTH DOCTOR

Afterword by **COLIN BAKER**

DWM SPECIAL EDITION #3

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THE COMPLETE SIXTH DOCTOR



"You still seem a little ... unstable!"

Kicking off his reign at the end of a season, the Sixth Doctor heralded a break with tradition from the outset. Promising to bring to the series the unexpected, the unpredictable and, at times, the unstable, the overwhelming characteristic promised – and delivered – by this incarnation was change ... whether we liked it or not!

From cancelled seasons and controversial companions to that costume, Colin Baker's time on Doctor Who saw the series veer from one violent change to another. Even now, enjoying success with Big Finish, the chameleon-like Sixth Doctor continues to wrongfoot fans and defy expectation.

This special issue contains addenda and errata for all of DWM's Sixth Doctor Archives, painstakingly researched and compiled by Andrew Pixley as a companion to the original articles. We also present fascinating features from the finest Doctor Who writers, painting a picture of the Sixth Doctor's turbulent era from some extraordinary new perspectives.

Welcome to the world of the Sixth Doctor – comedian, clown, scapegoat and poll-winner. "You were expecting someone else?"

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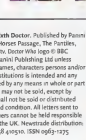


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It's rare to find anyone willing to defend, let alone champion, the Colin Baker era – perhaps the most unloved and certainly the most troubled period in *Doctor Who*'s long history. A garish, clashing hotchpotch of multicoloured visuals, fatally stymied by the sheer inappropriateness of the ideas that lie behind it. And that's just his coat. Ask the average fan what he thinks of the Colin Baker era, and the chances are you'll be treated to a selection of unenthusiastic mutterings about tacky sets, squeaky Daleks, six-foot Sontarans, ghastly music and overblown continuity-fests.

In short, we do the Colin Baker era a gross injustice. Of course it has its failings, and of course some of them are considerable, but that much is true of any period of *Doctor Who*. It would be wrong to suggest that there's nothing original or enterprising about this brief couple of seasons which, for all their well-catalogued misfortunes, are rich in detail and positively dripping with implication.

Like any era of *Doctor Who*, this one has its own trademarks and its own storytelling spirit. Whatever else exists in the Sixth Doctor's colourful new universe of gumblejacks, speelsnaps and weed plants, there's little room for the mundane. In fact, the present-day Earth often visited by his predecessor is almost entirely ignored. The Sixth Doctor makes only one trip to the twentieth century (even then it's only to London's back-streets and sewers, and for less than half a story), preferring instead to enjoy encounters with George Stephenson and H G Wells – remarkably, the first genuine historical figures to be encountered by the Doctor since the TARDIS left Tombstone at the end of *The Gunfighters*. And, considering that in real terms it lasts only two episodes longer than William Hartnell's first season, the Colin Baker era scores an impressive strike-rate of memorable new foes. To introduce Sil, the Rani, Glitz and the Valeyard in the space of two seasons is no mean achievement.

In terms of the Doctor's personal mythology, other changes are afoot. His official age has been hiked up to 900 and there are new approaches to continuity. Gone are the Davison era's increasingly obligatory flashback sequences, replaced instead by a more random, haphazard series of insights into the Doctor's past. His lapel-clutching, lip-tightening

Loving

hostility in the early stages of *The Twin Dilemma* instantly recalls William Hartnell without ever being an outright impersonation, and in the same story we learn that the Doctor's drinking parties with Azmael took place in his fourth incarnation ("I've regenerated twice since then!"). The Tbird Doctor turns up on, of all places, a Karfelon mural, and we even hear his voice for the briefest of moments as his confused successor recovers consciousness on Ravalox. If Slipbuck manages to suggest that this new Doctor is a trifle more bibulous than the earlier Baker, whose on-screen drinking habits seldom strayed beyond an appetite for ginger pop, then his fondness for quoting Shakespeare and the poets comes straight from his namesake's early seasons. And most obviously of all amid this ongoing lucky dip of past lives revisited, the Second Doctor shows up in person.

Amid all this self-reflexive mythologising, there's a redoubled effort to foster a kind of personality cult around the latest incarnation. Pip and Jane Baker, in many ways the quintessential Sixth Doctor

scriptwriters, have more than once remarked that because the show is called Doctor Who, the most important character is obviously the Doctor himself, and it's towards him that events must always gravitate. This is in fact a rather controversial notion in terms of established Doctor Who mythology, and it's certainly one that flies in the face of the character as originally conceived back in 1963. Since the arrival of Jon Pertwee every Doctor had taken centre-stage to a greater or lesser degree, but it's only with the advent of Colin Baker that the Doctor becomes not only the show's hero but also its fetishistic raison d'être: he smiles at us in the opening credits and, in a concerted attempt to foreground his dramatic involvement, almost every episode ending is structured to give him the last line and a big facial close-up. It's a deliberate device, but its effect is unfortunately rather limiting. Most of Doctor Who's classic cliffhangers involve the emergence of a gruesome monster or a physical threat, images which are inevitably more effective than a zoom onto the Doctor shouting "No!" It comes as little surprise that the era's most successful cliffhangers are of the traditional variety: the germination of the Vervoids, the Doctor convulsing in agony as Crozier switches on his infernal machinery, or the clawing hands dragging him beneath the shingle of a nightmare beach. Otherwise, the cliffhangers seem routine and unexciting, and with good reason: like much about this era, the insistence on ending each episode with a close-up of the Doctor smacks of the show surfacing on its own identity.

And this is a crucial point. It would be unrealistic to overlook the ineluctable air of excess that seems to permeate the Colin Baker stories, because for better or worse, it's one of their defining characteristics. Firstly, and most obviously, Season Twenty-Two marks both the apogee and the burn-out of the ongoing preoccupation with returning foes that had increasingly dominated the Davison era in the wake of the phenomenally popular *Earthshock*. Ten years earlier, the debut season of another Baker had glutted itself on successive encounters with Sontarans, Daleks and Cybermen, but that was in an earlier, simpler age, when the Sontarans were a fresh addition to the gallery of famous monsters and Davros was a new character rather than a flagging continuity requirement. Season Twenty-Two falls into a trap that

anyway. Seldom has a returning monster been quite so superfluously grafted onto an existing script as are the Sontarans in *The Two Doctors*. In the hands of their creator they are at least well-handled, although Robert Holmes prefers to lampoon their militaristic bombast than to present them as a genuine threat – understandably, because he's doubtless more interested in Dastari and the Androgums, the villains of his real story. The same goes for *The Mark of the Rani*: having created a fine new adversary for the Doctor, the writers are instructed to team her up with the Master. Quite rightly they invest more enthusiasm in

gallows humour are often very successful, far surpassing the previous year's Dalek story which had, like *Attack of the Cybermen*, contented itself with recycling the warmed-up leftovers of earlier encounters. The enormous difference between the two stories, which both hail from the pen of script editor Eric Seward and are separated by little more than a year, is revealing. What had happened to influence Seward's approach in the intervening months can be summed up in four words: *The Caves of Androzni*.

The critical success of Peter Davison's final four-partner casts a long shadow over the Colin Baker years,

WITH THE ADVENT OF COLIN BAKER THE DOCTOR BECOMES THE SHOW'S FETISHISTIC RAISON D'ÊTRE



An ersatz Doctor in ersatz agony: *The Two Doctors*

and over Season Twenty-Two in particular. Eric Seward's appreciation of Robert Holmes' work, and of his status as a veteran Doctor Who scriptwriter and editor, appears to have bordered on hero-worship. It's been well documented, not least by Seward himself, that a close bond had sprung up between the two during the production of *Androzni*, a bond which remained strong for the remainder of Holmes' life and which, doubtless without Holmes' knowledge and certainly without his connivance, became instrumental in Seward's growing sense of estrangement from his producer. With the benefit of hindsight it's abundantly clear that Eric Seward was little less than intoxicated by the success of *Androzni*, and much of his remaining time on Doctor Who was spent attempting, through various different approaches and with varying degrees of success, to emulate its style and subject matter.

But even the most cursory glance at Season Twenty-Two will attest to the fact that the magic *Androzni* formula was not something to be refined, mass-produced and bottled like so much rejuvenating spectro. Seward tries to replicate *Androzni*'s much-lauded "gritiness" throughout the season. There are shotguns, machine guns and hard-bitten mercenaries in *Attack of the Cybermen* and *Revolution of the Daleks*. There are masked or disfigured characters like Quillam, the Borad and the Mutant, whose villainy is mitigated by various sub-Sharaz Jek attempts at pathos. There's a new and ruthless taste, previously glimpsed in Seward's *Resurrection of the Daleks*, for condemning whole story-loads of characters to a cold, dispassionate death (the despatch of Griffiths and his escape party towards the end of *Attack* is surely an attempt to emulate the callously effective death of Salateen in *Androzni*, while the killing of a helpless blind lady in *The Two Doctors* breaks several new taboos for the show). Famously, there's also Season Twenty-Two's appetite for gross-out gore: if crushed hands, chewed rats and acid baths were supposed to make Doctor Who look hard and serious, they didn't always achieve the desired effect. And when the Doctor himself starts getting caught up in the cycle of violence (infamously when he poisons Shockeye before adding insult to injury with a James Bond-style quip about "just desserts", noticeably absent from Robert Holmes' subsequent novelisation), there's no doubt that things have got a little out of hand.

But Seward finally gets the balance more or less right in *Revolution of the Daleks*, the last and best story in this most problematic of seasons. Beautifully cast and played with all the verve of a Jacobean revenge tragedy, *Revolution* has a meaty enough set of characters to allow the final blood-bath to count for something. The tone still isn't perfect, and Seward hasn't learned how to break the storytelling rules with quite the same panache as his mentor (*Revolution* epitomises the Season Twenty-Two syndrome of failing to involve the Doctor and his companion in the main

the Alien

The Sixth Doctor? The Sixth Doctor?? THE SIXTH DOCTOR??!

Philip MacDonald looks behind the violence, the verbosity and the vile coat to get to the true heart(s) of the 'difficult' Doctor ...

Season Twelve had concertedly avoided: it uses its returning foes in a retrospective, even retrogressive, way. *Attack of the Cybermen* revives convoluted plot details from the early Cybermen stories, and even resuscitates the Cyber Controller last seen in *The Tomb of the Cybermen* two decades earlier. From the fans' point of view, the casting of the same (very fine) actor is evidence of an attentiveness to the programme's history, but on a practical level it makes an unfortunate laughing-stock of one of the Doctor's most formidable foes because, unlike actors, Cybermen shouldn't be susceptible to middle-age spread.

This tendency to put fan-pleasing stories before common sense is an unfortunate trademark of the season. And inevitably, very few fans were pleased

their new creation, and the result, as with the Sontarans in *The Two Doctors*, is the comic debunking of an established enemy. Whether this is an iconoclastic triumph or a betrayal of past glories is open to debate, but time and again in this season it's noticeable that the most rewarding elements are the fresh ingredients that shy away from the high-profile rematches.

In *Revolution of the Daleks*, Eric Seward does at last find a new direction of sorts for the Doctor's oldest enemies, but he does so only by marginalising them (and, it might be added, the Doctor and Peri) almost entirely, and making the story about something else instead: Reinvention of the Daleks might be a more apposite epithet. But the story's grim stylishness and

plot until the story is all but over – but compare this with Holmes scripts like *The Ribos Operation* or indeed *The Caves of Androzani*, and you'll see that it can be done rewardingly and almost undetectably. In some instances the script is rescued from bathos by the direction and performances (William Gaunt plays against his lines, finding in Orcini a redemptive streak of tattered nobility which simply isn't there in Saward's dialogue), but it's nevertheless instructive to regard *Revelation of the Daleks* as the successful culmination of a process which had prompted Saward to *Androzani*-fy a whole clutch of stories which might have succeeded far better if allowed simply to be themselves.

Outside the increasingly ponderous weight of Doctor Who history, other forces conspired to shape the character and nature of this short but colourful era: crucially, the sense of bloated, Rabelaisian excess

seldom so satirically and systematically as in the Colin Baker seasons. The era's most memorable new villain, Sil, is a comic totem of 1980s capitalism, a greedy, seedy little money-man with an eye on the main chance and a vain ego demanding constant gratification in the form of mirrors, moisturisers and marsh-minnows. That memorable lament of his superior, Kiv – "Then where will we be, eh? Dead! No! Worse than that, poor!" – offers a biting gloss on the get-rich, live-fast, retire-young ethic of the time.

There are times when the Sixth Doctor seems trapped in a cynical new universe in which market forces reign supreme and the only winners are the fast dealers and the asset-strippers. It's a universe in which economics dictate that the wealthy dead of Tranquil Repose will never return to life because "the idea of this place just doesn't work", and in which the awful truth about Davros's famine relief programme

pastiche of Margaret Thatcher in *The Happiness Patrol*, the Rani is only one of several power-hungry, husky-voiced iron ladies who populate the Sixth Doctor's era. Like Chessene she has a pathological disregard for those she considers inferior, and like Kara she is prepared to exploit and ruin the workforce in the cause of her own betterment.

And, in a final *coup de grace* which allows the Sixth Doctor's abruptly curtailed incumbency to go out on something of a thematic peak, the slimmest and most manipulative operators of all in this cruel new universe of back-stabbers and double-dealers turn out to be his own people. The Time Lords have devalued the Doctor's favourite planet and ordered the death of his companion; and, paradoxically, it's left to his evil alter ego to offer a challenge to their infamously spurious morality.

The Valeyard offers a final, bewildering twist to

Below: A reluctant Peri follows the Doctor into Space Station Camera's infrastructure in *The Two Doctors*. Right: The Doctor faces Davros – and about time too! – in *Revelation of the Daleks*. © BBC



which seems to haunt so many of the Colin Baker stories is very much of its time. The Sixth Doctor's brief tenure coincided with the zenith of the bleakly materialistic 1980s of Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher. The Twin Dilemma began airing during the first week of the epochal 1984-1985 miners' strike, and *The Trial of a Time Lord* drew to a close against a backdrop of political and financial scandals (Irrangate, Guinness shares, and even one of the periodic Jeffrey Archer resignations which have enlivened British politics over the last four decades) which spelled the beginning of the end for the Thatcherite dream of capitalism without moral accountability. In between times, both the space shuttle and the AIDS virus had exploded, and there had been global calamities in Bhopal, Chernobyl and Ethiopia. 1987 would see Thatcher re-elected, but it was also to be the year of Black Monday and of tragedies at King's Cross, Zeebrugge and Hungerford, all of which, in one way or another, seemed to warn of the danger inherent in putting profits ahead of social welfare.

The Sixth Doctor lived his short life during this brutal, hard-edged and often unpleasant time, and it is to the credit of the people who made these thirty-one television programmes that now, after the best part of two decades, they often come across as a blistering critique of their age. Big business is portrayed as the villain in plenty of earlier Doctor Who stories, but



THE SIXTH DOCTOR'S BRIEF TENURE COINCIDED WITH THE ZENITH OF THE BLEAKLY MATERIALISTIC 1980S

is suppressed to avoid the risk of "consumer resistance". It's a universe in which professional skills, whether they be the life-saving surgery of Crozier or the hired guns of Lytton and Glitz, are tendered out to the highest bidder. It's a universe in which a state-run penal establishment sells video recordings of torture and execution as a profitable sideline. It's a universe in which the up-and-coming Androgum species, "augmented" by the geneticist Dastari to take over the baton of progress from our own "tired and effete" life-form, embraces as its motto the chillingly 1980s nostrum "the gratification of pleasure is the sole motive of action".

Appropriately enough for a story made during the throes of the most turbulent period of industrial unrest in recent British history, the Doctor even gets to teach the blinkered government of Varos the true value of its mining industry, and thus to help its oppressed mineworkers to throw off their chains. So it's perhaps unfortunate that his very next voyage, to nineteenth-century England, offers a rather reactionary vision of loutishly militant miners inhibiting progress by breaking machines, and it hardly helps when we discover that they're doing this not for sound ideological reasons but because an alien chemist is mucking about with their brain fluids – without which interference, by implication, they'd be a bunch of well-behaved, forelock-tugging little proletarians. But we can't ignore the fact that, long before Sheila Hancock's celebrated

another of the Colin Baker era's recurrent themes: that nothing is what it seems, and that everything and everyone exists in a nightmarish, never-ending state of flux and mutability. In story after story, the villains of the Colin Baker era are geneticists, chemists, zoologists and agronomists, bent for whatever reason on perverting the course of nature and modifying reality. Like a latter-day Dr Moreau, Crozier has littered the shores of Thoros Beta with genetic mutations, while the disfigured Quilliam has experimented on his own body and Magellan has warped himself into the monstrous Borad. Mestor plans to blast his modified eggs across the galaxy, while he himself invades the bodies of Drak and Azrael. The intervention of warped and irresponsible scientists condemns both Luke Ward and Ruth Baxter to sprout twigs and leaves. Dastari augments the primitive Chessene to new levels of super-intellect, but cannot militate against the reassertion of her baser instincts. Davros is genetically transforming the inhabitants of Tranquil Repose into Daleks (and his mutated failures, as on Skaro many millennia before, are cast out into the wastelands of Neeros). Lytton becomes a Cyberman. Even the Doctor himself assumes Androgum form, while poor Peri narrowly escapes mutation into a bird on Varos, a Morlox on Karfel and a Mentor on Thoros Beta!

In the mid-1980s the generic label for this kind of thing was "body horror", a fashionable ingredient of much of the fantasy cinema of the time. Its roots, however, lie long before the films of John Carpenter

and David Cronenberg. Like Mary Shelley and (appropriately) H G Wells, the Colin Baker era exploits physical mutation as an index of the uncertainty created by its characters' habit of breaking moral and ontological boundaries. Who exactly is the Valeyard – the Doctor? Mr Poplewick? The Keeper of the Matrix? Yes, all three, it would appear. But on another level altogether, characters in these stories are often not what they seem. The shallowness of television illusion preoccupies the Sixth Doctor's seasons: everywhere you look there are vicarious viewers and commentators whose interpolations build up extra layers of fictionality and artifice. The Sontarans leave a fake snuff-movie of the Second Doctor's demise to throw his future self off the scent, while the Doctor undermines his enemies' alliance in *The Mark of the Rani* by convincing the Master that the Rani's televised destruction of the TARDIS is an



"optical illusion created on the screen". The Borad and the DJ use false screen personae which belie their real characters. The corridors of Karfel and the catacombs of Tranquil Repose are beady viewed by the spy-cameras of the Borad, Davros, Kara and the DJ, while the Doctor's adventures in the Punishment Dome are televised not only on BBC1 but also on Varos, where Arak and Etta punch in their audience appreciation figures and provide us with a running commentary. In the same story the Governor of Varos usurps the role of director, instructing his videotape editor to "Cut it – now!" at the end of the first episode, while the Doctor pulls the rug from under the ostentatious melodrama of the execution scene by enquiring of one of the characters: "Do you always get the priest parts?"

Most blatantly, the whole of Season Twenty-Three is mediated for the viewer via the device of the Doctor's trial: each adventure is introduced, watched, commented upon and ultimately manipulated by the characters in the courtroom. The Valeyard falsifies his on-screen evidence to the extent that we are shown entire scenes which are "untrue". What really happened in the communications room of the Hyperion III? Did the Doctor really torture Peri beneath the cliffs of Thoros Beta? Are we to assume that Yreanos forced Crozier to reverse Peri's final operation, or was the whole brain-swap scene faked up in the first place? In which case, at what stage do the events we see unfolding on Thoros Beta become "untrue"? By the time an ostensibly real courtroom

scene pulls out to reveal the same courtroom watching it on their viewing screen, we can't be sure of anything any more.

Detractors of the Colin Baker era are wrong, then, to suggest that there's nothing going on in these two-and-a-bit seasons: on the contrary, there's a great deal going on, and it's absolutely fascinating. The Colin Baker era offers a dramatic demonstration of the self-scrutiny that was preoccupying British television in the mid-1980s. As budgets were slashed, as breakfast TV consolidated itself and spawned its inevitable progeny – daytime TV – and as the rise of satellite and cable loomed large on the horizon, Doctor Who once again became a barometer of the age. The Colin Baker era is television about television; it's Doctor Who devouring its own young. The fact that the spectre of cancellation hovered over the Sixth Doctor's tenure, and that his two complete seasons were separated by a pregnant 18-month pause, now looks like the crowning piece of textual irony: this is an era in which, on planet after planet, the medium is the message, and the need to get something –



anything – on screen is more important than what that something actually is. It's entirely fitting, then, that the era's most celebrated moment of philosophical impact is the disturbing and fundamentally anxious image of a blank television screen that concludes *Vengeance on Varos*.

Bestrident the era is the most colourful and contradictory feature of all, the Sixth Doctor himself. In an early interview, before he had shot so much as a line of dialogue, Colin Baker declared that he wanted to make his Doctor "quirky, witty and unexpected", and much was made of his having viewed hours of old episodes, the better to absorb what he called "the essential Doctoriness" of the role. It appears, however, that the central character soon became the subject of a creative struggle between the actor's instincts, the production team's impositions, and the show's natural requirements. Colin Baker has made no secret of the fact that he was less than entirely happy with his costume, a garish creation which, despite conforming broadly to the pseudo-Edwardian frock-coat-and-flannels image of his immediate predecessor, represented an alarming and dislocating lurch away from the traditionally throw-together wardrobes of the earlier Doctors.

The process of tidying up the Doctor and repackaging him had begun as early as Tom Baker's final season, and Peter Davison's outfit certainly had a far more obviously "designed" feel than any that had gone before. But Colin Baker's costume was another thing altogether: nobody in the world, or indeed the universe, would dress like that, and this, we were told, was emblematic of the new Doctor's creed, chiming in with his newfound propensity for riding roughshod over the conventional notions of gentlemanliness hitherto associated with the character. "I am, in your terms, an alien", he tells Peri in *The Twin Dilemma*. "I am therefore bound to have different

values and customs." It's an honest if strained attempt to find a new angle on the character, but it's telling that this and the story's unnecessarily abrasive closing line ("I am the Doctor – whether you like it or not!") sound more like a mission statement from the production office than anything the character might genuinely say. In the months between the announcement of Colin Baker's casting and the screening of his first episode there had been a fair (or, more to the point, an utterly unfunny) degree of criticism from a minority of fans, who took it upon themselves to declare that the actor was unsuitable for the role long before they'd seen him in action. This coincided with a time when producer John Nathan-Turner was particularly sensitive to fan criticism, and there can be little doubt that certain lines in that final scene in *The Twin Dilemma* are not so much the Doctor talking to Peri, as the producer addressing his detractors. "I would suggest, Peri, that you wait a little before criticising my new persona" must surely go down as one of the most loaded lines in Doctor Who history.

There is much that's wonderful about the Sixth Doctor, and much of it fulfils the "quirky, witty and unexpected" portrayal anticipated by Colin Baker. At times he synthesises the endearing pomposity of the Third Doctor with the schoolboy recklessness of the Second: this is the lovable Doctor who fishes for gumblejacks, accidentally burns Peri's dinner and enthuses about the aroma of "a freshly laundered forest". This most appealing and least contrived side of the

The many faces of the Sixth Doctor.

Far left: Hapless hero (*The Trial of a Time Lord*). Opposite: Fearless fighter (*Vengeance on Varos*). Below: Sweet-natured softie (*The Two Doctors*). ALL © BBC



Sixth Doctor is one in which listeners of the Big Finish audio plays have now become better acquainted, and it demonstrates beyond any doubt why Colin Baker was cast in the role.

What is more of a mystery is why, having found their new Doctor, the production team appeared to fight shy of the warm, clever, cuddly-if-acerbic character so naturally available to them, and instead asked Colin Baker to play a character so diametrically at odds with it. The pre-packaged, much-publicised character-notes of the Sixth Doctor – alien, unpredictable, abrasive, impatient, moody – are all to be found in the early years of Tom Baker's portrayal, but there they are the subtlest of grace-notes against the abiding heroism of the main melody. Played as the Sixth Doctor's defining characteristics they sit uncomfortably in the show's format, putting a barrier between the character and his audience. The lack of compassion exhibited by the Doctor in *The Twin Dilemma*, which leaves Peri gasping like a fish out of water and repeatedly rebounds on the fortunes of the hapless Hugo Lang, is presumably an attempt to recapture the thrilling alienness of that famous scene in *Pyramids of Mars* in which the Doctor silences



Sarah's condemnation of his callous reaction to the death of Laurence Scarman. What *The Twin Dilemma* fails to recognise is the deep universal compassion that underpins that scene, and is indeed the very point of it. As a result *The Twin Dilemma*'s best moments are to be found in the few essentially Doctorish attributes which Colin Baker manages to smuggle past the superimposed character-brief: his sudden moment of concern for Peri ("Pon my word, you really are frightened, aren't you?"), his lament for a lost paradise in the Jacondan wasteland, and his

and the show is suddenly more watchable.

It's perhaps no surprise that these scenes bail from the writer who gives Colin Baker's Doctor most of his finest moments on screen. As the only scriptwriter other than Seward to have written for earlier Doctors as well as the Sixth, Robert Holmes has a firmer grasp than many on the concept of "essential Doctoriness". It's a quality which blossoms forth not only in Colin Baker's notable diatribe against the corruption of his own people, but in other, more finely measured

Left: The Doctor tortures Peri (or does he? Etc.) in *The Trial of a Time Lord* Parts Five to Eight. Below: the Doctor aboard the *Hyperion III*. Below right: Mel and the Doctor mugging in the Matrix! **»** bbc



TOO OFTEN THE SIXTH DOCTOR IS WRITTEN AS A DISLIKEABLE, ARGUMENTATIVE POLTROON!

dignified gravity at Azmael's deathbed. Elsewhere, *The Twin Dilemma* provides ample demonstration that, despite its legendarily flexible format, Doctor Who simply isn't robust enough to maintain the manic anti-hero Doctor originally conceived by Nathan-Turner and Seward.

Perhaps as a result of this, in Season Twenty-Two the character becomes a mass of contradictions. The new Doctor's tendency to descend into a Slough of Despond at the slightest mishap, and sit sighing operatically until his companion's entreaties rouse him into action, seems misguided in its essential un-Doctoriness; more fundamentally, it also makes for boring television. Matters aren't helped by the flawed attempt to make sparks fly in his relationship with Peri – again, perhaps, an attempt to recreate the unforced cut-and-thrust egalitarianism of the Fourth Doctor's friendship with Sarah Jane. But this doesn't sound like a friendship at all: it's more like a disintegrating marriage. In the endless bickering that marks time in the overlong TARDIS scenes of the season, the Doctor comes across not as a charismatic alien with his own mysterious value-system, but as a dislikeable, argumentative poltroon. And rather than seeming feisty and giving as good as she gets, which is presumably the idea, Peri often seems merely childish, petulant and stupid. One of the most worthwhile changes ushered in after the 18-month suspension is the relaxation of this forced, overwrought and unpleasant-to-watch relationship; from the first woodland scene in *The Trial of a Time Lord*, affectionate banter has replaced henpecked bickering. The characters have become Doctor and companion, and – surprise, surprise – they are suddenly more likeable

moments which reveal in this brashest and loudest of Doctors an unexpected gentleness. In both *The Two Doctors* and *The Trial of a Time Lord*, Holmes gives the Doctor a contemplative moment in which his concern for the effects of cosmic events on the minutiae of the universe offers a profoundly touching insight into the rootless life of the time-traveller. Far more than any portentous blather about the web of time, Colin Baker's quiet and beautifully judged musings on galaxies and butterflies take us straight to the philosophical heart of the Doctor, and of Doctor Who.

Similarly, his Shakespearean valediction to Oscar Botcherby in *The Two Doctors* offer a moment of unexpected subtlety and grace. How like Robert Holmes to name a ham actor after the fabled Academy Award, and how like Holmes to subvert an ostensibly comic scene by twisting it into tragedy. Initially Oscar's death seems absurd – the tone of the scene is so odd that we're half-expecting him to get up and crack a joke – but when the Doctor takes Oscar's quotation from Hamlet a step further by evoking Horatio's famous farewell to the Prince, bathos transmutes seamlessly into a moment of understated pathos. It's one of the strangest and most unsettling moments in the whole era – and, in its own wrong-footing way, it's more shocking than any amount of demonstrative gore.

What's even more interesting about Oscar is that,

with his theatrical, quote-laden, larger-than-life manner, he's an obvious reflection of the Sixth Doctor himself. Robert Holmes often includes in his scripts a serio-comic counterpoint to the Doctor and his companion (most blatantly in *Cornwall of Monsters*, in which Vorg and Shira offer a distorting reflection of the Doctor and Jo: a flamboyant travelling showman with a magical box of tricks, accompanied by a sceptical, leggy blonde in stack-heeled boots and glam-rock get-up). In *The Two Doctors*, Oscar and Anita mirror the Doctor and Peri from the outset. Compare their respective opening scenes: Peri looks on askance as the Doctor rhapsodises about the joys of angling, while a bemused Anita is subjected to Oscar's peroration on moth-collecting. Both scenarios feed the story's core themes, counterpointing the sensual villainy of Shockeye who, like Oscar and the Doctor, is indulging in a pastime which involves the pursuit of pleasure through cruelty to lesser species. The Doctor's rhapsodic description of pan-fried gumblejack as "ambrosia steeped in nectar", just like Oscar's evocation of the moths he kills as "painted beauties, sleeping all day and rising with the sunset to whisper on gossamer wings of damask and silk", is in keeping with Shockeye's enthusiasm for the culinary potential of humans.

This sense of a philosophical challenge to conventional notions of morally acceptable behaviour runs like a seam throughout the Colin Baker era, and is one of its strongest suits. When the Doctor first plays his "different values and customs" card at the end of *The Twin Dilemma*, he's setting the template for an era which systematically questions the dramatic preconceptions of Doctor Who and, on a wider scale, the validity of our established moral sensibilities. At the end of *The Two Doctors* our hero vows to become a vegetarian (and, if later references to nut roast rolls and carrot juice are anything

to go by, he remains true to his word). By doing so is he able to face down the Rani's entirely rational justification for her treatment of humans in the previous story: "Do they worry about the lesser species when they sink their teeth into a lamb chop?" But, in a universe in which the Doctor can commit an unwilling act of genocide against a race of sentient plants, is even vegetarianism enough? Like the Rani, Davros excuses his atrocities with incontrovertible logic: his argument that there is a humanitarian benefit in the recycling of corpses into food is impossible to deny.

In no other era is the Doctor's treatment of other people and other races subjected to such unflinching scrutiny. We are invited to ponder difficult and ultimately unanswerable questions about the Doctor's betrayal of Lytton; about the dubious wisdom of his interference in the affairs of Varos; about the ethical validity of his mission to halt the Kartz-Reimer experiments and his dispassionate despatching of Shockeye; about his imperilling of Peri's life on Thoros Beta; and about his destruction of the Veroids, who are, after all, only behaving as nature intended. After such a catalogue of fallibility, fumbled heroism and downright failure, it seems more than appropriate that the era should reach its climax with an epic battle between the Doctor and his darker side. Sadly, circumstances would dictate that Season Twenty-Three's bewildering cliffhanger was to be the last hurrah of a kaleidoscopic, clashing, contradictory era which, in now seems, was just on the point of recovering from its debilitating birth-pangs and was, at last, in the process of struggling to its feet ... **»**





Doctor! Doctor!

A well-known TV villain in the role? A desire to emphasise the character's alienness? An outfit in garish bad taste? Andrew Pixley discovers that the status quo of the Peter Davison era was being well and truly upset as the Doctor Who team began to plan the debut of the Time Lord's sixth incarnation ...

On Wednesday 2 June 1982, Colin Baker completed his recording for a guest star slot in Studio 1 at BBC Television Centre. He thanked the crew for the enjoyment the role had given him and – always keen for more work – quipped to the production team “Remember – the name’s Baker!” The part which Baker had just played was Commander Maxil – for the Doctor Who story *Arc of Infinity*.

During the 1970s, Colin Baker had established himself as tough businessman Paul Merrony in the BBC1 drama series *The Brothers*, as well as appearing in BBC2’s adaptation of *War and Peace* and the ATV soap opera *For Maddy With Love*. As well as a lot of stage plays, he was also regularly in demand as a guest artist on numerous television series, and a Doctor Who serial starring Peter Davison was just one such appearance in many. Because he had got on well with the team, however, Baker found himself at the wedding reception of Lynn Richards, the production assistant on *Arc of Infinity*, some time later. The series’ producer, John Nathan-Turner, was also present and noted how Baker kept the guests entertained with his warmth and quick wit. Richards subsequently suggested Baker to the producer as a potential new Doctor should Davison not be persuaded to stay with the show; this notion also came from director Ron Jones, and was cemented when Nathan-Turner again encountered the actor at a party given by Doctor Who co-star Sarah Sutton.

In early Autumn 1982, Nathan-Turner renewed acquaintances with Baker; the actor was touring in *Relatively Speaking* with Gerald Flood, who himself was being approached regarding a role in Doctor Who. The two men got on well together and Nathan-Turner felt that Baker would give a very different portrayal of the Doctor to that of Davison. While Baker was in Richmond with a tour of *Suddenly at Home*, Nathan-Turner contacted him and invited him to come and see him for a chat. Visiting the BBC on Friday 10 June 1983, Baker was amazed to find that – rather than being asked to open a fete as he expected – the producer was offering him the opportunity to become the sixth television incarnation of the Doctor. The role appealed immensely; Baker had watched the programme regularly since the first episode, and had previously applied for the part when Tom Baker left in 1980. Armed with tapes of his predecessors, Baker was sent away for a week to consider the offer.

Both Baker and Nathan-Turner were keen to emphasise the Doctor’s alien qualities, despite his human appearance. They also wanted to make him slightly unapproachable because of his unexpected behaviour. The notion of the Doctor’s passion for literature soon arose, along with the new incarnation’s love of puns and bad jokes. There were a series of discussions in London between Baker and Nathan-Turner about the new Doctor’s persona; after one of these the pair went to the Bush Hotel in Shepherd’s Green for a drink and bumped into Davison and his wife, Sandra Dickinson. The next morning at rehearsals for *Warriors of the Deep*, Davison told Nathan-Turner that he had guessed Baker would be his replacement; this deduction came about because he knew the producer hated going to the Bush Hotel and because he remembered Baker’s comments the previous year. Davison agreed to keep the news a secret.

Baker’s approval by David Reid, the Head of Drama, was almost a formality, with much of their meeting taken up discussing cricket. The BBC seemed keen for Baker to do at least four years, and the actor was eager to beat Tom Baker’s seven-year stint. However, even at this point, script editor Eric Saward was having misgivings about Baker’s casting. Saward’s working relationship with Nathan-Turner was now becoming slightly

strained after two years. Despite this, Saward worked with Nathan-Turner and Baker on crafting a new persona which would seem slightly more unpleasant than his predecessors. To contrast with the quieter incarnation of Davison, the team wanted to make Baker’s interpretation bigger and louder from the outset.

Davison’s departure was hinted at on BBC1’s *Take Two* programme on Tuesday 21 June, but the announcement was not made for some time. Saward started to assess which serials would be suitable for the new Doctor’s first season. A number of stories were not taken forward; these included *The Darkness* by Eric Pringle (submitted in August 1981), *Nightmare Country* by Steve Gallagher (a storyline submitted in late 1982 about the Doctor becoming trapped in a Reality Simulator which Saward ruled out on cost grounds), three story ideas from Barbara Clegg submitted in late 1982 (*The Elite* about a race of intelligent youths directed by a lone Dalek, *The Underworld* where the Doctor travels down the River Styx in Ancient Greece, and *The Rogue TARDIS* where the Doctor goes in search of a missing Time Lord who has regenerated to merge with his ship), the two-part *Circus of*

BAKER AND JOHN NATHAN-TURNER WERE BOTH KEEN TO EMPHASISE THE DOCTOR’S ALIEN QUALITIES



From villain to hero: actor Colin Baker becomes the sixth face of Doctor Who.

Destiny storyline from Ben Steed delivered in January 1983, two four-part outlines from William Emms (Doctor Who and the Zeldan and Doctor Who and the SCI – the latter about a mental control of the population of the planet Alden) and *Wormongers* by Marc Platt and ‘Charles M Stevens’ (a pen-name for Doctor Who historian Jeremy Bentham) which was submitted on spec in 1983 and concerned the Sontarans and Rutans landing in England during the 1940s Blitz. Other more recent storylines were still emerging. Robin Squire had been commissioned for *Ghost Planet* on Friday 20 May, and Glen McCoy was commissioned for the first episode of a futuristic four-part story featuring H G Wells called *Timelash* in late June; also still in development were *Planet of Fear*, a much reworked idea about video nasties and penal colonies from Philip Martin, *Space Whale* by Patrick Mills (about a colony living within a vast animal) which was still undergoing alterations after being dropped from production late on in 1982, and an outline from Peter Grimwade entitled *League of the Tanderds*.

It was in June 1983 that a major format change was decided upon for Doctor Who; the series would abandon the 25 minute format it had used for two decades and instead air in 45 minute double-length episodes. By this time, there were few BBC drama series still made in a half-hour format, and the new shows could be re-edited for overseas sales in the traditional length. One of the first new storylines to be commissioned was *Hex* from veteran writers Hazel Adair and Peter Ling, a story inspired by bee-hives kept by Adair; in this, the Doctor and his companion Peri would come up against the insectoid Queen Zafra of Hexagora. The commission came about largely because of Nathan-Turner’s work with Adair and Ling in trying to relaunch their 1960s soap opera *Compact* for the 1980s under the title *Impact*; having handled the show’s twentieth anniversary and become the first producer to cast two Doctors, Nathan-Turner was now keen to move on from Doctor Who, but in order to do so had to create a new project within the BBC. Nathan-Turner liked *Hex*, but Saward was less keen. Another commission in the new format was *Children of Seth* from Christopher Bailey, with a target delivery of Monday 26 September.

By the time Davison’s departure from Doctor Who was announced to the



Above: Colin Baker brings a splash of colour to rainy Hammersmith as the Sixth Doctor is unveiled. **TOP LEFT:** The regeneration-added Doctor and Peri meet an old acquaintance of the Time Lord – Azmael (Maurice Denham). **LEFT:**



world on Thursday 28 July, a potential idea for the new Doctor's debut story had been submitted in the form of *A Stitch in Time* by Anthony Steven – a colleague of Nathan-Turner's from *All Creatures Great and Small*. Around the same time, Johnny Byrne submitted an outline for *The Guardians of Prophecy* (aka *The Place of Serenity*); this was a sequel to his 1981 serial *The Keeper of Traken* and concerned a tomb robber called Malador who plans to steal a sophisticated computer to animate the Melkur.

A test episode of Steven's idea – now entitled *A Switch in Time* – was commissioned at the start of August, and the title of Bailey's serial was corrected to *The Children of Seth* concurrent with his deadline being extended to Monday 17 October. Nicola Bryant, who would be Baker's co-star as the new American companion Peri Brown, was contracted on Tuesday 9 August for an initial 12 episodes, with a BBC option on a minimum of 20 shows a year for the next two years; Bryant was due to start work on her stories in October. The following week, a reformed Plant of Fear was delivered by Martin, while Brian Finch – another *All Creatures* writer – was commissioned for the two-part *Livanthian* [sic] for Monday 7 November.

Unaware that a new Doctor had been selected for some weeks, the popular press continued their speculation of the new Doctor into mid-August, with Brian Blessed reportedly winning the part according to various publications. Possibles included Bernard Hill, Matthew Kelly, Patrick Moore, and a long line of actresses suggested were suggested by the *Daily Star* and *Daily Express* on Wednesday 17 August. Two days later, Colin Baker was announced as the new Doctor with a photocall and interview on Radio 4's PM programme. BBC News covered the story with clips of Baker shooting Davison from *Arc of Infinity* and most papers carried the news on Saturday 20, Baker appeared on *Breakfast Time* on Monday 22 and was interviewed in Derby on local radio on Sunday 28. In the meantime, the scripts for his debut serial, now entitled *The Twin Dilemma*, were commissioned; Nathan-Turner had decided to break with convention and introduce the new Doctor in the final serial of the season, allowing viewers a chance to

further when his wife, Marion, gave birth to a son, Jack, shortly before Baker departed for another Swedish tour in *The Mousetrap* in mid-October.

Back in England, work continued on Steven's scripts for *The Twin Dilemma* while the Bakers were commissioned to develop the two-part *Enter the Rani* scripts; Finch also delivered his scripts – correctly entitled *Leviathan* – to deadline. Then tragedy struck. In early November, Colin Baker was appearing in Malmo when he heard that Jack had died at the age of only seven weeks. The actor and his wife were badly shaken at the loss of their son to "Cot Death Syndrome" and, as a result, Baker became a fervent campaigner for the Foundation for the Study of Infant Deaths.

Baker attended his first costume fitting as the Doctor on Wednesday 30 November. The new Doctor's outfit was one element which the actor was somewhat dubious about; it was – as anticipated – as loud as his new portrayal was expected to be, but had been garishly crafted in accordance with Nathan-Turner's description of "totally tasteless". Baker himself would have preferred something more sombre and dark, such as black velvet. By now, industrial action had forced a delay on Davison's swansong, *The Caves of Androzani*, meaning that Baker's debut serial would not start production until the New Year; this allowed Seward extra time to conduct heavy rewrites to Steven's scripts.

With *Plant of Fear* delivered, Martin submitted three more ideas to

ONE ELEMENT WHICH BAKER WAS SOMEWHAT DUBIOUS ABOUT WAS HIS OUTFIT. IT WAS GARISHLY CRAFTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH JNT'S BRIEF OF "TOTALLY TASTELESS"

see Baker in action before the summer break.

As the Davison serials continued in production, Baker continued with interviews about his new role; featuring on Tony Blackburn's *Sunday Show* on Sunday 4 September, he discussed topics including the likelihood of K9 returning. Another potential storyline, *Too Clever By Far*, about a renegade Time Lady interfering with Earth's history, was commissioned from husband-and-wife writers Pip and Jane Baker at the end of the month on the strength of a script Nathan-Turner had found left in his office by his predecessor, Graham Williams. On Friday 30 September, Colin Baker was formally contracted for his first five episodes of *Doctor Who* which would be made over December 1983 and January 1984. His second – and larger – contract came on Tuesday 4 October; this covered 13 episodes of 50 minutes duration (or their equivalents) to be made from June 1984 to February 1985, with options on three similar series through to 1988. In addition to clinching the deal on this major role, Baker's life was blessed

Saward on Wednesday 28 December; these were *Doomswraiths* (about an alien race arriving on Earth to discover that their "humanity" experiment had failed), *Spac 23* (where the *TARDIS* is pulled into a graveyard of spaceships controlled by the Master) and *Valley of Shadows* (in which the Doctor journeys into the Egyptian underworld to save "Peri"). Two more stories were lined up as 1984 arrived. Andrew Smith was commissioned on Tuesday 10 January to produce a breakdown entitled *The First Sonarans* for Monday 13 February, and the first episode of *The Cold War* – a sequel to the 1967 serial *The Tomb of the Cybermen* – was given the go-ahead from TV newcomer Paula Woolsey. Woolsey was in fact a former girlfriend of Seward's, and the storyline had actually been developed by Seward in conjunction with DJ and record producer Ian Levine who had been acting as consultant on the show's history to the production office since 1980.

Tuesday 10 January also saw Colin Baker being unveiled in costume as the Doctor to the British press in a rain-drenched Hammersmith Park. At



the subsequent press conference, Nathan-Turner started a rumour that he was thinking of changing the shape of the TARDIS from the familiar police box. This was a deliberate publicity gimmick and, indeed, most newspapers covered the story the next day. On Thursday 12 January, Baker recorded his first scene as the Doctor for the end of *The Caves of Androzani* in Studio 6 at Television Centre. Flushed with delight at starting the role of a lifetime, Baker returned home and proclaimed "I am the Doctor!" to his wife ... who promptly told him to take the rubbish out!

The first episode of another two-part story, *The Macro Men*, was commissioned from Tony Rudlin and actress Ingrid Pitt on Thursday 19 January; set in 1983, this drew upon the World War II experiments by the Americans to render the USS *Eldridge* invisible to radar, only to unleash microscopic creatures native to Earth. At the end of January, recording finally started on *The Twin Dilemma* and Nathan-Turner set about arranging for the third new serial to have location filming in America. Since 1980, *Doctor Who* had been taking off in America in quite a big way, and the twentieth anniversary events of 1983 had seen unprecedented interest in the British series. During production of *The Twin Dilemma*, Nathan-Turner arranged for Baker and Bryant to accompany him on one of his increasingly frequent visits to an American convention.

While production on *The Twin Dilemma* continued into February, Ian Marter – who had played Harry Sullivan in the series from 1974 to 1975 – was commissioned on Thursday 2 February for a story breakdown entitled *Strange Encounters*; a first episode for this was later commissioned as *Volvok* and apparently concerned hospital overcrowding. Chris Boucher was commissioned for an untitled storyline on Tuesday 7 February with a deadline of Monday 5 February, but after delivery heard nothing from Seward and was soon busy on a half-hour drama pilot with a working title of *Star Caps*. The first Sontarans storyline was delivered on Monday 13, but by this time it was known that it would not be developed since the cloned warmongs were returning in a story by their creator, former script editor Robert Holmes. Holmes was commissioned for a three-part serial called *The Knullen Inheritance* to feature the Sontarans as well as the Second Doctor and his companion Jamie – played by Patrick Troughton and Frazier Hines – and making use of the proposed filming in New Orleans. Holmes attended the recording for *The Twin Dilemma* and was disappointed with Baker's first story; Seward too felt the new Doctor was ill-served by his debut and Levine was similarly unimpressed when shown a copy by a delighted Nathan-Turner before broadcast.



Left: The new TARDIS team of Colin Baker and Nicola Bryant make themselves known to Her Majesty's press! **Star** Above: The Doctor and Peri go to work on Mestor's eggs as they explore the hatchery in *The Twin Dilemma*. **Star**

In the meantime, one of the missing episodes of *Doctor Who* was returned to the BBC from Australia; this was *The Final Test*, the concluding part of the 1966 serial *The Celestial Toy-maker*, one of several episodes recovered since the BBC Archives put out an appeal in 1982. Levine discussed the recovery of the missing shows with *The Sunday Times* on Sunday 19 February. There was also a lot of discussion provoked by Nathan-Turner's TARDIS gimmick, with letters demanding the protection of the police box appearing in the *Radio Times* on Thursday 9 February. Nathan-Turner spoke to Simon Bates on Radio 4's *Feedback* on Friday 17 on the matter, and also talked to concerned young viewers on Saturday *Superstore* on Saturday 25. Attending the Interface III convention in London, Nathan-Turner assured the attendees that the TARDIS would not really be changing.

Baker had finished recording *The Twin Dilemma* on Thursday 16 February, and poised himself for the lead up to his debut on BBC1. As March arrived, Seward suggested to writer and former script editor Christopher H. Bidmead that he might like to develop a story with the Master and the Tractators. The remaining episodes of *The Knullen Inheritance* were commissioned, with Nathan-Turner requesting extra funding from BBC Enterprises for the ten day New Orleans shoot planned for early August. Seward also wanted to proceed with the Rani serial, but declined Martin's other three story ideas. On Friday 9 March, *Feedback* confirmed that the police box TARDIS had been "saved" and, two days later, the *Sunday Times Magazine* ran a piece emphasising the proliferation of US-based conventions for the show.

Thursday 15 March saw Baker and Bryant attending a photocall, while Baker was both the subject of an article in the *Radio Times* and made a costumed appearance on *Blue Peter* (the programme also ran a competition to win an autographed Gastropod egg the following week). The pair then attended Studio TC7 on Saturday 17 to chat to both Mike Reid and the Master (Anthony Ainley phoning in from home) on Saturday *Superstore*; they were also guests on Thursday 22 (the day *The Twin Dilemma* debuted) on *Breakfast Time* and Baker had joined his predecessor, Peter Davison, to appear on *Harty* on Tuesday 20 March. Even K9 came out of retirement on Saturday 24 March to appear at the Science Museum with Mat Irvine on Saturday *Superstore*, and the following week's edition had more Who content as Mike Reid chatted to *Doctor Who* historian David J. Howe over a question about the series. In the midst of the media circus for the new Doctor, Seward was also able to get himself commissioned for a new storyline under the title *The End of the Road* which was planned to conclude Baker's first full season. Having seen the new Doctor, press coverage was variable; the *Daily Star* was impressed and the *Sunday Express* felt his dialogue would bring success, while Judith Simmons of the *Daily Express* described the incarnation as "a nasty fellow, manic and violent".

At the end of March 1984, *Doctor Who* had completed its twenty-first season and truly came of age. The ratings for the new season were around seven million, which was only slightly down on previous years. However, the show's popularity in America was greater than ever – evidenced by John Ostrander getting the rights to stage *The Inheritors of Time*, a play based on the series, in Chicago later that Spring. In England, the series retained a very high profile, fuelled by the new Doctor. The more adult approach to stories seemed set to continue, and if the viewing figures for the double-length episodes of *Resurrection of the Daleks* were a pointer, the change of format would be a significant ratings success ...

The Twin Dilemma

I Am What I Am **BY MARK GATISS**

DWM ARCHIVE

DWM 270

COMMISSIONING

Tue 2 Aug 83 A Switch in Time (WIT) Part One script commissioned for Wed 17 Aug 83; delivered Mon 15 Aug 83
Wed 24 Aug 83 The Twin Dilemma Parts Two to Four scripts commissioned for Fri 26 Aug 83; delivered Fri 26 Aug 83 (Parts Two and Three)

PRODUCTION

Tue 24 Jan 84 Television Centre Studio 8: TARDIS Console Room/Corridor/Wardrobe; Edgeworth Spacecraft Bridge/Bunker; Safe House Titan Three
Wed 25 Jan 84 Television Centre Studio 8: Safe House Titan Three; TARDIS Console Room; Ducting; Safe House: Main Area/Rest Area/Self Destruct Chamber
Thu 26 Jan 84 Television Centre Studio 8: Twin's Playroom; Ops Room; Edgeworth Spacecraft Bridge
Tue 7 Feb 84 Springwell Quarry, Rickmansworth, Herts (Titan Three)
Wed 8 Feb 84 Gerrards Cross Gravel Pits, Wapseys Wood, Bucks (Jaconda)
Tue 14 Feb 84 Television Centre Studio 3: Mestor's Throne Room; Passage; Edgeworth's Lab and incubator
Wed 15 Feb 84 Television Centre Studio 3: Edgeworth's Lab and incubator; Corridor; Mestor's Throne Room; Passage; Passage near TARDIS
Thu 16 Feb 84 Television Centre Studio 3: Mestor's Throne Room; Passage near TARDIS; Corridor; Corridor near Throne Room; TARDIS Console Room



February 1984: It's cold outside but Edwin Richfield swelters in his bulky Mestor costume. © BBC



rhod:

We took a video of the 1984 Doctor Who story The Twin Dilemma and watched it. Before that, we attempted to reconstruct from memory exact feelings and impressions of first viewing. Aware that Colin Baker debut has fearsomely rotten reputation. Have not seen it for years and years. Determined to keep an open mind. Here goes ...

12.22pm. The potion has taken effect. Memories blur and flash in a state of queer flux. Gastropods. Silver foil. Woman in a wooden room. Worst child acting until the Weasley twins in Harry Potter. Strangulation. "You don't even know what a peereee is!" Not Noooooo!

14.39pm. Calmer now. Patterns become clearer. Remember coming to story still warm with joy following The Caves of Androzani. This the last story to be watched as a genuine family unit. All, even by-now cynical brother, hushed and moved by story's excellence. I move on. Excited by new Doctor. Like the idea of a more abrasive, Hartnell-esque figure. Slightly worried that the Doctor appears to be wearing more make-up than companion. Lips pink as salmon. Regeneration is unstable. Seen that before. Think that there's nothing wrong with a nice, simple story to introduce new Doctor. Think that this is not a nice, simple story but a silly, simplistic one. Looks very cheap. Oh dear, what's this! Doctor tries to kill companion! Audience surely alienated. Seems that new Doctor's personality has been arrived at by drawing crude lines from Peter Davison's portrayal. Nice to Nasty. Quiet to Loud. Pleasant to Brash. Celery to Cat Badge. Understated to ... ohmygodthatsturned! Try to sleep now. Embolism in bloodstream.

Double trouble: terrible twins Romulus and Remus in a break between playing equations or combing their hair or something. © BBC

23.13pm. Mind clearer. Remember sticking with story and trying to convince self that it's fine. It will never win any poll but it's fine. Evidence to the contrary mounts. Maurice Denham wasted. Kevin McNally embarrassed. Please let this end. A new season will put things to rights. Dash the potion against the wall. I must face this thing in the cold light of the early twenty-first century. I must be firm!

Result:

Have watched story from beginning to end. A curious thing has happened. Story is simultaneously as bad as remembered and yet not bad at all. Will try to explain. Writing is stilted and faux eccentric, just like the new Doctor himself. Full of clever-clever quoting and verbosity which will become hallmark of this era. A condition known as 'Pipjane'. Thinking behind the Doctor's instability is confused and off-putting. No Doctor has ever been this wilfully unpleasant nor so crudely drawn. We are expected to fear him one minute then like him again immediately after. Peri could give Gareth Gates a r-r-r-run for his money and her 'interplay' with the Doctor is shallow and tiresome. Twins even worse than remembered - "Our awrms are pwactically dwooping off!" - and it occurs to me, not for the first time, that these are the same four sets of 25 minutes once occupied by Pyramids of Mars. How could they get it so wrong?

Conclusion:

And yet, and yet ... Modelwork is excellent and Jocondan bird men are rather fetching. The final scene with the dying Azmael

is genuinely moving and the story, silly and simplistic as it undoubtedly is, does make a kind of straightforward sense. Far preferable to those later stories which just seemed to be a series of random incidents strung together. With the benefit of hindsight it seems unfair to attack this story as symptomatic of all that went wrong with Doctor Who. If this Doctor had been given five or six seasons this story would be shrugged off as

easily as *The Undewater Menace* or *Warriors of the Deep* or *The Time Monster*. Difference is that the era of the Sixth Doctor was the one where doubt crept in. Remember letters in *Radio Times* praising new Doctor and Season Twenty-Two. Think that if writing had improved and abrasiveness of character had been toned down, this Doctor could have been fine and well-liked. Am penitent. Must go to Titan 3 to atone ...

ARCHIVE EXTRA

① Tuesday 10 July 1983: Anthony Steven submitted a storyline entitled *A Stitch in Time* to Eric Saward, asking if he could let him know if it was usable or not

② Thursday 13 October 1983: Saward wrote to Steven asking for rewrites on the first two episodes, with the new Part One to be delivered within six days. A revised Part One was delivered on time, and Saward asked for a new Part Two by Friday 28 October, proposing that he and Steven meet on Tuesday 1 November to discuss the final two episodes which would have to be completed, without fail, by Monday 14 November. A rough draft of *The Twin Dilemma* was available to be sent to Peter Moffatt on Wednesday 9 November. On Wednesday 23 November 1983, Saward sent his revised scripts for the first two episodes of Steven, indicating that there had been numerous changes in Part One

③ In Saward's revised rehearsal scripts, Romulus and Remus played a game at screens below which were "what would appear to be organ manuals" in Part One. After Sylvest departs, the scene continued. The twins suddenly seem excited, with Romulus flipping a coin (referred to as a janus) and asking Remus to call "Gates or beginning?" Remus accuses his brother of cheating and they fight for the coin. Remus flips this time and wins, declaring "You're counterpoint. I'll be theme." The boys seat themselves at the manuals, flex their fingers like pianists and lean forward, "the tips of their fingers pressed lightly to their foreheads. We sense their perfect empathy ... an almost perfect telepathic communication between them. They are no longer concert pianists, but composers ... Romulus strikes keyboard ... He proceeds some way without hesitation. Then he leans back. Remus moves at once into counterpoint." The boys are exhausted at the end of game, and as Remus strikes the final notes, "the letters QED come up on his screen." When Edgeworth used his revitalizing modulator ("a tall translucent cylinder") in Part Two, "the figure of Edgeworth dissolves into a mass of spinning molecules". In Part Three, "Edgeworth's manner changes. He becomes brisk, like an old fashioned school teacher". His ship, the *XV 773*, was described as "A shabby space freighter" but "its appearance is deceptive"

④ The film recce for the serial took place on Saturday 5 November, and Wednesday 7 and Monday 12 December 1983. It was planned that rehearsals would start on Wednesday 28 December 1983. The production schedule was revised again on Tuesday 3 January, with a note that Colin Baker and Nicola Bryant would not be available on certain dates

⑤ Peter Clay was originally to play Sylvest and stuntman Gareth Milne was to have been a Jocondan Guard. The Conrad Twins were the

sons of Les Conrad, an extra on the series since 1964. When Edwin Richfield was approached on Thursday 17 November, the role he was offered was called "Aslan". A character list dated 10 November also referred to Aslan, as well as a character called Zell

⑥ Tuesday 7 February 1984: The cover of the film schedule had a regal crest topped by a Dalek, and the ersatz Latin motto "Col Inbo Krist Hen Eudoc Tor"

⑦ In 1984 publicity postcards of Colin Baker and Nicola Bryant in their costumes from *The Twin Dilemma* were soon made available. In 1985, Suzie Trevor marketed the cat badge

worn by Baker in the serial quite prominently at the London Jewellery Store and via the DWAS. Harlequin Miniatures issued figures of the Doctor and Peri from the serial in 1997, followed by Romulus, Noma and Mestor in 1998 and Remus in 1999

⑧ The serial aired in Germany on VOX in 1995 as *Zweimal Einstein* (Twice Einstein). Mute 16mm film trims exist for the serial in a private collection

⑨ In the Credits section, the dual credit for Assistant Floor Manager is because Beth Millward supervised both blocks and was joined by Stephen Jeffrey-Poulter on the second block



Edgeworth, alias Azmael, alias Maurice Denham. Poor man, probably didn't know his alias from his elbow ... © BBC

RADIO TIMES

Thu 22 Mar 84 Part One:
no synopsis
Fri 23 Mar 84 Part Two:
no synopsis
Thu 29 Mar 84 Part Three:
no synopsis
Fri 30 Mar 84 Part Four:
no synopsis

LEFT: Edgeworth (or Azmael or whoever), brings the Sylvest twins to the safe house on Titan 3. © BBC

BELOW: Two Jocondan eyes keeping a hawklike eye on the situation. © BBC



Everything Must Change

Though the public and the fans seemed a little perturbed by the new Doctor, things were moving ahead at full steam in preparation for Colin Baker's first season. Andrew Pixley looks back at a year which saw Doctor Who returning in triumph to its Saturday teatime slot – but in a somewhat different form ...

As April 1984 arrived, work began in earnest on Colin Baker's first full season as the Doctor in the new format of 50-minute stories. John Nathan-Turner had by now worked out the cost implications for the reformatting, and established that the duration of the 13 new shows should be set at 45 minutes rather than 50 minutes; there had not been a budgetary increase for Doctor Who (indeed, most drama series were then suffering budget cuts of 5%) and 50-minute shows meant that they would be squeezing an extra 50 minutes out across the whole season in real terms. With the bulk of the production schedule in place, Nathan-Turner departed from England in late March on his first real holiday in years, taking in San Francisco, Hawaii, Sydney and Hong Kong. The producer was also attempting to have a second Doctor Who serial soundtrack released on LP and cassette by the BBC akin to the 1979 release of *Genesis of the Daleks*; this would be the missing serial *The Tomb of the Cybermen*, with narration by Patrick Troughton and taken from clear soundtracks provided by James Russell.

The plan was that this could be available prior to the screening of the story's sequel which would open the new season in January 1985.

Meanwhile, Eric Seward continued to line up the six new stories for the season; these were planned to run in the order *Attack of the Cybermen* (the new title for *The Cold War* which Seward had effectively written himself), *The Space Whale* by Patrick Mills, *The Krakool Inheritance* by Robert Holmes, *Enter the Rani* by Pip and Jane Baker (which would also become the annual vehicle for the Master as played by Anthony Ainley), *Planet of Fear* by Philip Martin and then concluding with his own *The End of the Road* in which he hoped to feature the Daleks and Davros again. Several of these writers were new to Doctor Who and this was something which Nathan-Turner wanted to encourage. Seward however wanted to stick with experienced writers as their material required less editing; by now, Seward was also giving Ian Levine scripts to read in advance to minimise on rewrites at an early stage. When director Matthew Robinson joined the Doctor Who team for *Attack of the Cybermen* in April, he felt that the uneasy relationship he had sensed between Seward and Nathan-Turner when working on *Resurrection of the Daleks* the previous Autumn had deteriorated further.

While Nathan-Turner was away, a proposal for a Doctor Who cinema feature was submitted to the BBC by Milton Subotsky who had produced both *Dr Who* and the Daleks and Daleks – *Invasion Earth 2150AD* in the 1960s. The suggestion for a third film, entitled *Doctor Who's Greatest Adventure*, was received by the production team's new boss Jonathan Powell – the Head of Drama Series and Serials – during April 1984. Meanwhile, WH Allen's novelisation programme was catching up with all the serials featuring recent Doctors that were available, and the appearance of Doctor Who – *The Dominators* by Ian Marter heralded a new era for the range as previously unadapted scripts featuring the first three Doctors were now turned into books. Around this time, Richard Hurndall, who had portrayed the first Doctor the previous year in *The Five Doctors*, died on Friday 13 April, aged 73.

On Monday 16 April, Ronnie Marsh – acting as a special assistant to Powell – informed the production team that there would be no extra funding available from the BBC to allow *The Krakool Inheritance* to have

location filming in New Orleans. This came as a major blow to the team and other ideas for an overseas venue were discussed prior to Nathan-Turner's return to the office on Tuesday 8 May. Colin Baker was now also back in the country, having concluded his Swedish tour of *The Mousetrap* in the first week of May.

Friday 11 May saw Nicola Bryant contracted for a minimum of ten of the 13 new shows, with an option for the subsequent season on the BBC's side. By now, continuing problems with *The Space Whale* had forced its abandonment from the schedules, and Serial 6V now became *Vengeance on Varos*, a slightly amended version of *Planet of Fear*. Noting that the character of Sil, an unscrupulous alien businessman, had proved popular with Nathan-

THE BBC'S NEW HEAD OF DRAMA, JONATHAN POWELL, PASSED THE SCRIPTS WITH MINIMAL COMMENT



The Doctor surveys the Punishment Dome in *Vengeance on Varos* © BBC

Turner and Seward, Martin submitted an idea for a new serial featuring him at the end of May. The venue for Holmes' story, retitled first *The Androgam Inheritance* and then *The Two Doctors*, was now Spain which would allow the crew to stay within budget and mean as little rewriting as possible for Holmes.

The first viewer feedback on the new Doctor and Peri appeared on BBC's *Take Two* on Wednesday 23 May when a variety of younger viewers gave some generally unfavourable comments to Nathan-Turner alongside clips from *The Twin Dilemma*. The following Monday, Baker and Bryant reconvened for rehearsals, with location shooting on *Attack of the Cybermen* starting the next day. In the meantime, the new Doctor made his comic strip debut in the pages of *Marvel's The Official Doctor Who Magazine* where he was soon accompanied by a popular shape-changing Whifferdill called Frobisher who was normally seen in the form of a penguin.

Also during May, Richard Franklin, who had played UNIT's Captain Yates in the 1970s, announced his Doctor Who play *Recall UNIT* would be appearing at the Edinburgh Festival that Summer. In June, Bradford Film Theatre scheduled a season of Doctor

Who episodes taken from the selection presented at the NFT in *The Developing Art* the previous October. Nathan-Turner continued with his policy of contracting big name guest stars for the series, often from the world of light entertainment. Faith Brown and Koo Stark were the latest examples for *Attack of the Cybermen*, and Stark's subsequent departure from the show prior to rehearsal generated more press coverage from papers like *The Sun* on Monday 19 June. Although the serial continued the violent and more adult trend begun by the early evening *Davison* serials – notably *Resurrection of the Daleks* – the scripts were all passed by Powell who gave only minimal and usually positive comment back to Nathan-Turner prior to production; this was a fair cry from the detailed notes often passed back to the team by Powell's predecessor, David Reid.

In the midst of recording *Attack of the Cybermen*, Baker and Nathan-Turner jetted out to Ohio for Panopticon West in Columbus from Friday 15 June; shortly afterwards, Nathan-Turner also attended an event in Rochester, New York. Back in London, the producer commissioned Christopher H Bidmead



Above: Queue of the Cybermen as the silver giants are readied for the season opener. Right: Baker and Bryant promote *Cinderella* on the set of *Timelash*. Below: Pearce, Hines and Baker take a break in Spain during *The Two Doctors*.



for an untitled scene breakdown on Tuesday 19 with a target delivery of Monday 9 July. At the same time, the missing Episode 3 of *The Wheel in Space* was returned by a film collector, and publishers Severn House were informed that they could produce 'Choose Your Own Adventure' Doctor Who books. There was a steady stream of merchandise at this time, particularly exploiting the lucrative American market. The 1976 record adventure *Doctor Who* and the Pescatons was reissued for a Stateside market hungry for more Tom Baker product, and Marvel US started to reprint comic strips from editions of *Doctor Who Weekly* in a new comic devoted to the series. Such was the demand for the show in America, that when the TARDIS 21 convention run by the commercial Spirit of Light organisation was shifted back to November's thanksgiving weekend, the Panopticon convention in England being planned by the Doctor Who Appreciation Society had to be cancelled since most of the guests would be in Chicago.

To keep the ball rolling until the new season, publicity shots of Baker and guest star Faith Brown appeared in the *Daily Express* on Tuesday 3 July, explaining that 'Faith puts on a new face for Dr Who'. Nathan-Turner arranged two batches of summer repeats; first came *The King's Demons* on Friday evenings, and then a compilation of *The Awakening* (originally scheduled for broadcast on Wednesday 18 July). In the meantime, production began on the studio-bound *Vengeance on Varos* and the scripts for *The End of the Road* were commissioned; this new Dalek story would be written by Saward on a freelance basis as he took a six week holiday between contracts from Friday 27 July. By Thursday 19 July, a deal for the cast and crew to film in Spain on a reduced allowance was struck. The second BBC home video – an edited version of *The Brain of Morbius* – was released on Monday 23 July, and fans could soon assemble their own Daleks from a detailed kit manufactured by Sevans and play with it on a

playmat from SP Sport. British conventions also continued to proliferate with AggieCon 2 in Ealing in July and Leisure Hive in Swindon in August.

In the second week of August, the team making *The Two Doctors* headed for Spain under the auspices of Nathan-Turner and director Peter Moffatt while Saward went to Greece to develop his Dalek story which was set at a luxury memorial plot in homage to Evelyn Waugh's novel *The Loved One*; Moffatt now sensed there was a feeling of tension between the producer and his script editor. While the film crew laboured in the heat of Spain, BBC viewers enjoyed the four-part version of *The Five Doctors* broadcast daily from Tuesday 14. Monday 13 saw Peter Grimwade being commissioned for a scene breakdown on *League of the Tanderis*, and Saturday 18 was the preview day for Franklin's *Reall UNIT* or *The Great Tin Bag Mystery*; the play ran from Monday 20 to Saturday 25 at the Moray House Theatre in Edinburgh. This satire on the Falklands War of 1982 and the current government of Margaret Thatcher had been written by Franklin with George A Cairns; Nicholas Courtney had been forced to drop out (although he still provided a voice-over) and the Brigadier was replaced by Major Molesworth MC (Richard Kettlewell) while Franklin and John Levene reprised the roles of Yates and Sergeant Benton alongside a cast of helpful Edinburgh DWAS members and John Scott Martin as a bizarre Dalek Supreme. A suggestion to issue novelisations both of this play and *The*

NATHAN-TURNER HEADED FOR SPAIN WHILE SAWARD LEFT FOR GREECE TO WRITE HIS DALEK STORY. BY NOW THERE WAS AN OBVIOUS TENSION BETWEEN THE TWO



Inheritors of Time were rejected by the BBC.

Back from Spain, Baker and Nathan-Turner travelled to Blackpool to open the new Space Invader ride at the resort's Pleasure Beach on Tuesday 21 August, an event covered the next day by the *West Lancashire Evening Gazette* and which planted a new story idea in the producer's mind. Before studio work on *The Two Doctors* began, Baker joined former companion Elisabeth Sladen at the Kenilworth Town and Country Festival on Saturday 24 August, with Jon Pertwee, his Whomobile and Janet Fielding attending the next day. Back at the BBC, Martin's script for *Vengeance on Varos* – and the character of Sil in particular – was felt to have worked well by Nathan-Turner's team. As such, a sequel entitled *Mission on Magnus* was commissioned on Wednesday 29 August; this was a staff contribution rather than freelance work since Martin had now joined BBC Pebble Mill as a radio drama producer. Meanwhile, fans could buy World International's *Doctor Who Annual 1985* with some new adventures of the new Doctor and Peri which included an encounter with the Master.

As September arrived, an article about Baker appeared in *Woman's Realm*, Peter Haining's chronicle of the series entitled *The Key to Time* was



Above: Carmen Gomez gets the point as James Saxon looks on, during recording for *The Two Doctors*. Below: Colin Baker, Patrick Troughton and Frazer Hines rehearse the Second Doctor's Androgum augmentation.

published by WH Allen, a stash of film cans in Nigeria included missing episodes of both 1965's *The Time Meddler* and 1966's *The War Machines*... and a chap called Michael Grade took over as Controller of BBC1. Recording continued on *The Two Doctors*, with the studio being visited on Friday 14 September by DJ Andy Peebles to record a half-hour edition of the radio show *Wavelength* for broadcast the following Thursday. The idea of a story set at Blackpool Pleasure Beach was developed, with Graham Williams being commissioned for a two-part story breakdown, *Arctide*, on Tuesday 25 September; Saward travelled to Blackpool with Williams to find locations that could feature in the narrative, and the script editor suggested that a supervillain could be making use of a local mob in his evil plans. As the villain of the piece, Saward asked Williams to incorporate the Celestial Toymaker from the 1966 serial of the same name, loaning the former producer the scripts of Brian Hayles' earlier story.

After *The Two Doctors* was completed, the regulars took the chance of a holiday at the start of October with Baker travelling to Majorca and Bryant flying to America. In the meantime, Paul Vanezis obtained proof that three missing installments of 1964's *The Reign of Terror* were held at the Cyprus Broadcasting Corporation, and Nathan-Turner suggested that the footage for the incomplete 1979 serial *Shada* could be used on home video with suitable linking material. Back from the sun, Baker made his British convention debut at WhoCon 21 held at London's Bloomsbury Crest Hotel on Saturday 13 October. Nathan-Turner was also present, and screenings included a message from Bryant and Hines on the set of *The Two Doctors*, the recovered *The Final Test* and BBC footage of 1983's *Longleaf Celebrations*. On Monday 15, Edward Joffe of Multivision Communications had submitted a new film proposal to the BBC; the Corporation agreed to this, providing that a television Doctor was the star and that Nathan-Turner supervised production. Davison was sounded out as the star, and Bidmead was considered to write the screenplay.

The following Friday, Nathan-Turner and production manager Gary Downie set off on another location recon for the next season's overseas serial. The venue selected was Singapore, which the BBC had already used relatively cheaply on the wartime drama series *Tenko* with the help of Mr Tan of the Singapore Tourist Board. On Saturday 20, Nathan-Turner and Downie they took in the Instant Asia Show and a city tour, while the rest of the itinerary included the Botanical Gardens on Sunday 21, the Chinese Gardens and junks on Monday 22 and the zoo and opera on Wednesday 24 before returning to London on Thursday 25. After their return, Saward and



Holmes watched 40 minutes of their location footage, and on Friday 26 Holmes was commissioned for the first episode of a three-part serial with the working title *Yellow Fever And How To Cure It*.

In the meantime, Baker and Bryant had joined Mark Strickson, Patrick Troughton and others to take part in a 15 mile sponsored walk for Barnardo's on Sunday 21 October, the day before travelling up to a rain-lashed Shropshire for the problematic but extensive location shoot on *The Mark of the Rani* (the new title of *Enter the Rani*). Nathan-Turner was very impressed with Kate O'Mara's

performance as the Rani and soon decided that he would like to use this new Time Lady villain in another serial.

The flood of merchandise continued as Fine Art Castings embarked upon an extensive range of miniature figures from the series, WH Allen issued *The Doctor Who Potters Book* so that devotees could craft their favourite characters in wool, and more prints by Andrew Skilleter were waiting in the wings from Who Dares. As November arrived, Nathan-Turner found that another year had passed without him being able to find a new series to move on to; the producer decided to stay for Season Twenty-Three.

A clip of the first TARDIS take-off featured on *Saturday Superstore* on Saturday 3 November, and three days later both Baker and Bryant were booked for the next 13-episode run of *Doctor Who* to be made from April 1985 to February 1986. On Thursday 8, Nathan-Turner decided not to use Peter Grimwade's *League of the Tondreds* for the next season; this ended Grimwade's five year association as a writer/director on the show, his relationship with Nathan-Turner having soured after a misunderstanding two years earlier. Forging ahead with the next overseas story, Nathan-Turner set about clearing the use of the Rani for Holmes' Singapore serial on Monday 12. However, Holmes was reluctant to go through the rewrites of *The Two Doctors* again if the location should change, and asked to have work on *Yellow Fever* delayed until the venue was confirmed. A basic outline for the story was to see the Master and Rani operating under the guise of a travelling street theatre, and involved in a plot with the Autons; as the serial opened, Peri would see the Statue of Liberty on the TARDIS scanner and think she was back in America, only to find that this was one



Left: The exquisite Eleanore Bron (Madame Kara) gets to meet the new Doctor, Colin Baker – offscreen, at least! – on screen. Above: Director Graeme Harper talks Colin through a scene in the Garden of Fond Memories – in reality IBM's Portsmouth headquarters. © J. B. HARRIS

of many miniature landmarks in a massive cultural garden in Singapore. Martin was getting on well with Mission on Magnus, and Seward asked him to deliver this on Thursday 20 December; this story, set on the female-dominated planet of Magnus Epsilon, would see Sil working alongside the Doctor's former school bully Anzor and feature the return of the Ice Warriors under Commander Vedikael. Williams was also commissioned for *The Nightmare Fair* (formerly *Arade*) on Saturday 17 November; the Celestial Toymaker, to be played again by Michael Gough, would trick the Doctor into helping to open a gateway for a powerful destructive force. Wally K Daly, a radio writer who had written the sitcom *There Comes a Time*, had devised a two-part story called *The Ultimate Evil* which was a possibility for Serial 7B. In this story, the Doctor and Peri would come up against an unscrupulous arms supplier called the Dwarf Mordant who is fuelling a war between the alien races of the Tranquellans and the Ameliorons.

Nathan-Turner also set about lining up directors; he hoped that Matthew Robinson would direct *The Nightmare Fair*, followed by *The Ultimate Evil*

now was another Target quiz book from WH Allen in the form of *Doctor Who: Brain Teasers and Mind Benders* by teenager Adrian Heath.

Nathan-Turner managed another trip to an American convention during December while *Timelash* was being recorded. He was also heavily involved with a Doctor Who-orientated pantomime, another production of *Cinderella* at the Gaumont Theatre in Southampton; the cast included Baker, Bryant, former companion Mary Tamm and Jacqueline Peace (a guest star from *The Two Doctors*) while Fiona Cumming directed. Soon after *Timelash* concluded its studio sessions, the cast started to promote their Christmas show with material in the *Daily Express* on Saturday 22 December. The panto opened on Boxing Day, and over the Christmas period television viewers were treated to a repeat of Baker's appearance on *Blue Peter* in the series' "highlights of the year" on New Year's Eve, while the actor paid tribute to Bernard Miles on Miles' *This Is Your Life* the day after.

Anticipation of the new season was high amongst fans – not least because Doctor Who was now confirmed as returning to Saturday teatime after almost four years. That said, the show had not been allocated the early evening 6.05pm slot which Nathan-Turner and Seward had hoped for; with the popular Jim'll Fix It occupying the desired position, *Attack of the Cybermen* was due to begin Season Twenty-Two at the earlier time of 5.20pm on Saturday 5 January 1986. BBC's *Breakfast Time* screened the cliffhanger to the first of the new episodes on Friday 4, and the next morning saw Baker, Bryant, Tamm and Pearce talking to presenter Mike Reid and *Attack of the Cybermen* guest star Sarah Greene on Saturday *Supernatural* in Studio 1CC – promoting the new season and the final week of *Cinderella*.

For the first couple of weeks, *Doctor Who* was running against TV movies like *Escape to Terror* on ITV and the opening night figure of almost nine million was a healthy start – the largest audience in almost three years. During their final week in panto, Baker and Bryant began filming on *Revelation of the Daleks* (the final title of *The End of the Road*) on the South Coast. Promotion of the show continued to be good with the Radio Times running a feature on how Sarah Greene could be seen as a Cryon that Saturday on Thursday 10 January, and Faith Brown guesting on *All Star*

ANTICIPATION OF THE NEW SEASON WAS HIGH ONE TO THE SHOW'S RETURN TO SATURDAY EVENINGS – BUT NOT IN THE SLOT NATHAN-TURNER WANTED...

handled by Fiona Cumming, Ron Jones on *Mission on Magnus* and then Graeme Harper on *Yellow Fever*. Bob Gabriel was also approached for the final serial of the next season. Wednesday 21 saw Bidmead's storyline, now with the working title *In the Hollows of Time*, progressing to script stage with a target date of Friday 15 March 1986. This serial was inspired by the String Theory of physics that Bidmead was intrigued by which investigated the nature of universal dimensions.

With *The Mark of the Rani* completed, *The Sun* claiming to have "saved" the TARDIS police box on Saturday 17 November, and the much re-written *Timelash* into its rehearsal period, Baker, Bryant and Nathan-Turner joined many others from the show's history – such as Troughton, Davison and Terrance Dicks – to appear before 3500 fans at TARDIS 21 in Chicago over the anniversary weekend of Friday 23 to Sunday 25 November. In England, Radio West Midlands broadcast a modest tribute programme as Doctor Who came of age with an interview from Nathan-Turner. Released into the shops

Secrets the same day as she too made her Doctor Who appearance. The character of the Rani was cleared for use in *Yellow Fever* on Friday 25, and everything seemed to be shaping up well for Season Twenty-Three. *Vengeance on Varos* attracted press attention with items such as "Naughty Nicola!" from the *Daily Star* on Saturday 26 which suggested that viewers wanted Bryant to wear less revealing costumes as Peri. By now, the tide of Doctor Who product meant that a whole shop devoted to the show could be opened in Wapping by Colin Baker, shortly before the cast recorded the final studio session on *Revelation of the Daleks*, completing work on Friday 1 February, the day after the Radio Times had allocated a lavish colour promotion to *The Mark of the Rani*.

The ratings seemed to be improving, the new serials were lined up, and the new Doctor seemed to be off to a flying start on his first complete season. Doctor Who retained a massive fan following on both sides of the Atlantic, and – in January 1985 – everything looked good for the future ...

Attack of the Cybermen

Grimly Fiendish **BY JONATHAN MORRIS**

DWM ARCHIVE

DWM 207

COMMISSIONING

Tue 10 Jan 84 *The Cold War* Part One commissioned from Paula Woolsey for Mon 13 Feb 84; accepted Tue 21 Feb 84
Tue 21 Feb 84 *The Cold War* Part Two commissioned from Paula Woolsey for Wed 14 Mar 84

PRODUCTION

Tue 29 May 84 Glenhorne Road, Hammersmith, London (Bank Side Street); London Scrapyard, 161 Becklow Road, Hammersmith (Junkyard); Davis Road, Ealing, London (Alley)
Wed 30 – Thu 31 May 84 Gerrards Cross Gravel Pits, Wapsey Wood, Bucks (Telos)
Fri 1 Jun 84 Cameron Scrap Merchant, 36 Birbeck Road, London (Garage)
Thu 7 – Fri 8 Jun 84 Model Stage, Western Avenue, London: Model Filming
Thu 21 Jun 84 Television Centre Studio 6: TARDIS Small Room/Corridor/Console Room; Earth Cyber Base
Fri 22 Jun 84 Television Centre Studio 6: Earth Cyber Base; Sewers
Fri 6 Jul 84 Television Centre Studio 6: Refrigeration Unit; Corridor outside Refrigeration Unit
Sat 7 Jul 84 Television Centre Studio 6: Long Gallery; Cell
Sun 8 Jul 84 Television Centre Studio 6: Cyber Control Ducting; Cyber Laboratory; Cryon Base; Cryon Tunnel



e realise this must be confusing for you."

Remember Saturday afternoons? Peanut butter sandwiches and Trios ... no, I'm not going to be nostalgic. I didn't watch *Attack* on its original broadcast, I was out and videoed it, and even then my copy began with 'Unstable? Unstable?'. No. I've just watched my BBC video – in specially-cropped 'widescreen' thanks to my new TV – and I loved it. Just as much as I did 13 years ago.

Okay, so in retrospect there are some problems. It's too violent, yes, which gave Michael Grade the excuse he was looking for. Possibly there is too much leather-jacket machismo; too many grim-jawed gangsters and not enough joy. And all right, yes, so the Doctor's costume is distracting (though not quite as distracting as Peri's).

I'll readily admit the Cyber Controller is tubby and the Chameleon circuit gag isn't funny and 45 minutes of Doctor Who is too much in one go. And if you point out that the climax is poorly staged, I'd agree, but that applies to virtually every Doctor Who story – endings don't need to be good, there's a new story next week! And, okay, so the incidental music is not very incidental.

"And if you hold your head at an angle and squint, it looks exactly like Tomb of the Cybermen ..." © BBC

But aside from all that, it's thrilling. It's fast-paced, action-packed and looks terrific. As gritty and filmic as a proper television programme. The opening bank raid – 'Lose the motor', 'Seven pounds of plastic' – it's like *Minder*! The wonderfully grey surface of Telos – those shots through the mist of the alien moon! And darkness and shadows – how often do you get to see proper quality gloom in an 1980s Doctor Who? And the Cybermen's entrance in the sewers – just how cool is that?

Then there's the superb and committed cast – Brian Glover and Maurice Colbourne, for goodness' sake! One day I will even work out which one of the Cryons is Sarah Greene (I've already worked out which one was Faith Browne, that wasn't very difficult).

But the best thing about *Attack* is the story. It's ingenious. It brings together all sorts of baggage and turns in an exciting, dynamic plot. The way it combines the destruction of Mondas, with the tombs on Telos, and the invasion fleet, together with Halley's comet – it's an extraordinarily dextrous piece of work. The inclusion of the Cryons is inspired and fascinating. Plus there's a great twist regarding Lytton's motivation, which in turn gives the Doctor a proper slice of character development.

Some people claim there's too much 'continuity'. But it's all explained – quite cleverly – within the story, and it's used as a source of inspiration rather than derivation. Okay, so the Totter's Lane business and Chameleon Circuit uncomedy and all the references to Time Lords are somewhat over-egging the soufflé – largely because they never turn out to be relevant. And in retrospect the Doctor's lines about believing the Cyber Controller to be destroyed, and not knowing why Mondas was being piloted through space, do seem a bit erroneous. And, yes, it's a bit of Cyberman Greatest Hits compilation – but what's wrong with that? Every band's best album is its Greatest Hits.

At its heart, *Attack* is about making the Cybermen scary. It's about the horror of Cyber-conversion, in the same way that *Revelation* is about ... er, Dalekisation. We see the rejects of aborted conversions, we see the results of failed revivifications, we see Lytton and other characters undergoing transformation ... this is a story that really knows what it's doing. The Cybermen are portrayed as a desperate, dying race – how often does that happen?

And, apparently, it was co-written by the guy who gave Robbie Williams his first break into showbusiness. Wow!

So I can forgive it having the Doctor say "I am known as the Doctor" before giving his home address. I don't mind the Cyber Lieutenant sounding like Fozzy Bear. And I'll turn a blind eye to the Doctor shooting the baddies. Because ... *Attack* is fab. Fab. Fab!



Life in the freezer: the Doctor finds himself put on ice by the Cyber Controller. © BBC

ARCHIVE EXTRA

It is possible that the Cyberman storyline submitted by Gerry Davis around 1982/3 was Genesis of the Cybermen, an idea prompted by the original notes which Davis had made about the Cybermen with their creator Kit Pedler in 1966. The story concerned the Doctor and his assistant, "Felicity", visiting Mondas in the days before the Cybermen, and then accidentally travelling 50 years forward in time with Prince Sylvan, the son of King Paulus.

Here, they find that Mondas has become a purely scientific state under Sylvan's brother, Prince Dega, who is now King. Also, due to the Doctor's earlier intervention, Dega now has the technology to replace parts of his body with mechanics – creating the first Cybermen. As Felicity and Sylvan meet up with the anti-science rebels called Sylvans, the Doctor finds himself battling to prevent Dega processing all his followers to create the Cyber-race ...

Eric Seward was keen to write two stories for the new season because the delay of *The Return/Resurrection of the Daleks* from Season Twenty into Season Twenty-One meant that he had been unable to write a story the previous year. He also wanted to give the new Doctor a better start than with *The Twin Dilemma*, but John Nathan-Turner would not let him write the debut script of the season himself

● Ian Levine, who developed the storyline with Saward, had submitted several previous ideas to the production office. The first, given to then-script editor Christopher Bidmead in 1980, had concerned an alien big game hunt. Levine had then outlined two ideas for Saward from 1981 onwards – one about worlds within worlds, and another concerning the Master's fate in Tersurus linking in with the Black Guardian and Trafalgar Square. These were rejected by Nathan-Turner. As the origins of this new serial, Levine assembled a two-page outline called *Return to Telos*; this two-part notion specifically structured the first episode as a series of traps being set for the Doctor, with a showdown on Telos in the second episode. The outline included a second malfunctioning time machine, and also the emphasis on the Cyber-conversion process. As reference to the 1967 serial *The Tomb of the Cybermen* – which was not then known to exist – James Russell made two clear copies of the soundtrack from his collection; one of these was given to Mario Scaramini at BBC Enterprises as a suggestion for a soundtrack release akin to 1979's *Genesis of the Daleks* LP.

● Wednesday 26 October 1983: Nathan-Turner attempted to book Pennant Roberts as the director of Serial 6T, but he was unavailable. Matthew Robinson was subsequently booked on Monday 12 December 1983.

● Tuesday 10 January 1984: Saward wrote to Paula Woolkey to say that he would be commissioning the first episode of *The Cold War* and would contact her to discuss the new Doctor, as played by Colin Baker, shortly. On Tuesday 21 February 1984, Saward accepted the script with the provision that rewrites would need to be undertaken. The use of the Cybermen was negotiated with the estate of Kit Pedler in mid-February.

● There were various differences between the rehearsal scripts and the broadcast version. At the end of the scene in the TARDIS corridor where the Doctor promises that he will not harm Peri again, his companion originally replies "Maybe this is the new you ... Whether I can learn to live with it remains to be seen." In the opening film sequence with Lytton's gang, the script described their target as "Masters & Johnson – Merchant Bankers"; Masters and Johnson had been a successful sex therapy clinic since the 1950s. When Lytton is introduced, the script notes "We last met LYTTON in the story 'Resurrection of the Daleks'. A one-time mercenary soldier for the Daleks, he is now trapped on Earth making a living the best he can – he is a gangster." Griffiths and Payne are "a couple of rough, tough heavies in their early thirties" whereas "JOHN RUSSELL" is "about forty, and although fit and muscular like the others, is far from being a villain". When Lytton's team arrive at the garage, there was originally some dialogue about Payne being delayed by traffic and Griffiths "parking the wheels". At the start of the next scene, as Peri looks at Halley's Comet on the scanner, she asks if there could be any life inside it, adding that some scientists believe that life was brought to Earth by a comet or an asteroid; "Some of your scientists used to believe the Earth was flat," retorts the Doctor. In the scrapyard, the TARDIS changes into "an Egyptian Pillar – the sort used in the Cleopatra" – referring to the 1983 BBC2 drama series. When Lytton's two policemen

appear for the first time, the script notes "These are the accomplices of Lytton who escaped at the end of 'The Resurrection of the Daleks'." The TARDIS' arrival by the garage saw it appear "as a large wardrobe"; the majority of the scenes set just inside the garage were written for recording in studio. When the Doctor and Peri faced the two policemen, Peri comments that the handguns they are carrying are illegal in the States and is amazed that Britain has such liberated gun laws. "This country can always be relied upon to lead the way. It's a pity that sometimes it's in the wrong direction," replies the Doctor. At the end of the scene, Peri takes the gun with her saying that she may not be able to use the weapon, but she is still taking it into the sewers. The Cybermen patrolling the sewers were specified as being black in the scripts, whereas the Cyber Leader was silver; when the Cyber Controller was introduced, the script noted "The controller differs from a regular Cyberman in as much as that his head is large and domed shaped. The controller is also taller and lacks much of the pipework that adorns the average Cyberman." The Cybermen on the surface of Telos "are dressed in blue overalls with clear plastic helmets covering their heads. The WORK PARTY are dressed the same, only without the helmets. Apart from their heads and necks, no other part of their body is visible, including their hands." When the Doctor, Peri and Russell originally emerged from the sewers back into the garage, there was dialogue from Peri about the policemen having gone and a discussion about how the Cybermen may be inside the TARDIS (which is now "shaped as an organ!"). The Doctor also used the Cybergun to destroy Lytton's transmitter. Some of the garage scenes were shortened in a rewrite on Monday 14 May 1984.

● In Part Two of the rehearsal scripts, an early scene in the TARDIS Console Room has the Cyber Leader "examining some of the wall mounted components"; when the TARDIS materialises on Telos it does so as "a large gateway". When the Doctor encountered Flast in the Refrigeration Unit, she was described as "a grotesquely disfigured Cryon". In the scripts, the Cryons were described as "tall and lean. Although their features are humanoid, their faces have a thin, white membrane covering them which gives the appearance of a face seen through a mist. They are not at all unattractive to the human eye. All the Cryons are dressed in insulated suits of a very simple design. Rost is female, Varne is male." The scenes between Peri and the Cryons were more extensive; Varne explains to Peri that when the peaceful Cryons left Telos to escape the Cybermen, they inhabited comets and large asteroids which were cold enough for them. Rost explains that they plan to lure the Controller into Halley's Comet as a trap, using Mondas as the bait. The Cybermen need to use the comet to destroy life on Earth but preserve its minerals, and to do so will fill the comet with vastal. Another scene had the Cryons observing that the Cybermen were in the lower levels of the tomb, meaning they could only be looking for the TARDIS; Peri will have to help them move it. In a subsequent scene where Peri said she could not do this, Varne explained that the Cryons will destroy both her and the ship to prevent the Cybermen gaining control of the TARDIS. There was more dialogue between Flast and the Doctor

in the Refrigeration Unit, and Lytton reveals the Cryon plan to the Controller after being tortured. There was then different dialogue as the Doctor and Peri returned to the TARDIS, with the latter explaining how Lytton was not working for the Cybermen and Rost saying that she will take her people into the depths so that Telos can be theirs again. The script concluded with the Doctor considering his misjudgement of Lytton and adding "Perhaps you're right. Perhaps I haven't fully recovered from regeneration ... I think it's time I sorted things out."

● A number of continuity references appeared in the script. In Part One, the Doctor referred to recent events on Jacanda, indicating that the story was set more or less directly after *The Twin Dilemma*. In his erratic state, the Doctor had also been addressing Peri by different names: Tegan, Zoe, Susan, and even Jamie and the Terrible Zodin (who was referred to in a throwaway line in *The Five Doctors*).

● When Matthew Robinson joined the production, only the first of the two scripts was ready because alterations were still being made to the second. Nathan-Turner and Saward were both aware that there were problems with it, and all messages regarding changes were being sent back to Woolkey via Saward. Robinson and Saward then simplified elements of the second episode together, after Robinson had indicated that both episodes of *Attack of the Cybermen* were too short on Tuesday 17 April 1984. Commenting to Nathan-Turner about the scripts on Tuesday 24 April, Jonathan Powell indicated that it was "a real told story with some decent characterisation".

● Make-up was handled by Linda McInnes, a newcomer to the show as was the original costume designer Fran Holman; Holman was



An armed and dangerous Cryon. It might be Sarah Green or it might not. How are we supposed to tell? © BBC

ARRID TIMES

Sat 5 Jan 85 Part One: The Doctor meets up with an old adversary – Commander Lytton. But what should an old foe be doing in the London sewers?

Sat 12 Jan 85 Part Two: With the Doctor a prisoner of the Cybermen, he is finding it difficult to solve the riddle of Halley's Comet.

The Cyber Controller: ooh, that must have been a nasty knock he took ... © BBC





Living with the enemy: the Sixth Doctor isn't best pleased when the Cybermen hijack his TARDIS ... © BBC

replaced by Anusha Nieradzik who had worked on *Frontios*. Set designer Marjorie Pratt had worked on *Arc of Infinity* two years earlier, as had visual effects designer Chris Lawson who had also handled *Planet of Fire*.

Guest stars considered for the serial included Brian Blessed, James Bolam, Michael Elphick, Bernard Hill, Bob Hoskins, Anton Rodgers, Jack Shepherd, Edward Woodward, Dave Allen, Ralph Bates and Lance Percival. The role of Rost was offered to Angela Down on Wednesday 18 April and Jenny Hanley on Thursday 31 May; Maureen Lipman was offered the part of Flast on Monday 16 April; Angela Pleasance and Georgina Hale were possible for Varne; Brian Glover, Bob Peck and Francis Matthews were considered for Russell; and Stephen Bill, Terry Molloy, David Foxe, Hilary Mantel and Terry Mendicott for the parts of Payne and Griffiths (Mendicott was offered Griffiths on Thursday 19 April). Esther Freud, playing Threst, was the daughter of Liberal MP and broadcaster Clement Freud and sister of Emma Freud.

It was Levine who suggested that Michael Kilgariff be hired to reprise his role as the Cyber Controller from *The Tomb of the Cybermen*; Nathan-Turner knew the actor from his work at the *Player's Theatre* in London and asked him to join the serial. Kilgariff was rather confused by the script and felt that the scene in which Lytton's hands were crushed was rather too violent.

Monday 30 April 1984: The BBC design team visited the sewers under Hyde Park with permission of Thames Water.

Monday 21 May 1984: A location recon was held for the serials. During the following week it was decided to use the London HQ of United International Pictures on Glenthorne Road as the diamond merchants. It was Levine who suggested returning to the Gerrards Cross Gravel Pits – seen as Telos in *The Tomb of the Cybermen*. During the recon, the pits looked suitably bleak – but by the time the crew arrived to film a week or so later, the slopes and dunes were now blossoming with all manner of greenery which had to be pulled up before shooting could begin.

Rehearsals started on the film sequences at Acton on Monday 28 May; rehearsals for

the studio sessions began on Friday 8 June and Monday 25 June. Around this time, David Banks submitted two story ideas to the show. The first of these was *Dork Labyrinth* which Saward liked but felt was too expensive. The other one was set in the year 2006 on board a liner, and eventually became the *New Adventure* *loberg*.

Wednesday 30 May 1984: Filming went so well on this day that Robinson's team were able to shoot two scenes scheduled for the next day as well.

Friday 1 June 1984: Filming at Birkbeck Road was covered by the *Gazette* and *Post* on Thursday 7 June under the title "Dr Who has scrap with Cybermen".

Tuesday 12 June 1984: A photocall for Colin Baker, Faith Brown and Koo Stark was conducted for the serial; Stark had been contracted to play Varne on Thursday 7 June after being offered the role of Rost on Saturday 26 April, and her agent requested special conditions to ensure that the actress did not have to speak directly to the press.

Thursday 14 June 1984: Nathan-Turner informed Stark's agent that they would no longer be using her in the serial. There had been a disagreement over terms and conditions and the actress also found the Cryon outfit would be more uncomfortable than she first thought. She was replaced by Sarah Greene, an old friend of Robinson's, who was contacted about playing Varne when she returned from holiday in Barbados; she was contracted on Monday 25 June after agreeing to take the role on Monday 18.

Studio recordings for *Attack of the Cybermen* generally took place from 2.30pm to 6.00pm and 7.30pm to 10.00pm each day; the exceptions were Thursday 21 June (which did not have an afternoon session) and Friday 6 July (where afternoon recording ran from 3.30pm to 5.30pm). The second recording session was originally to take place from Thursday 5 but was dropped back a day. Afternoon recording was grudgingly cleared by Powell who felt it should only be allocated to series which required such working hours for child performers.

Thursday 21 June 1984: For the scenes on Telos in Part Two, Nicola Bryant was given a hurriedly selected off-the-peg jumpsuit which was a couple of sizes too big; this was to replace another outfit which had been made by an external company but which was now felt to be unsuitable. There were various problems during studio recording with the Cybermen voices where other character voices would be picked up on the microphones inside the helmets. A gag in Part One which Baker and Robinson had worked out involving the Doctor's apple was dropped from recording at the behest of Nathan-Turner who felt it was too "light entertainment"; in this, the apple fell off the TARDIS console as the ship tilted, the Doctor caught it, took a bite and tossed it to Peri.

Friday 22 June 1984: Recording on the sewer sets was attended by representatives of Thames Water as thanks for their co-operation; Thames Water offered Baker and Bryant an invitation to visit their sewers whenever they liked ...

Friday 6 July 1984: During camera rehearsals for her scenes, comic impressionist Faith Brown kept the cast and crew amused by delivering her lines in the manner of others, such as Hilda Ogden from *Coronation Street*; Brown had also worked with Robinson in rehearsals to establish a body language of hand movements for the Cryons. The Cryon costumes were latex one-piece body suits which the actresses had to be sewn into. For the make-up, they wore bald caps and had whitened faces beneath the semi-transparent masks which had all been cast from the same mould. When the join between the mask and the actresses' mouths was clearly visible, Nathan-Turner suggested the addition of silver whiskers. A photocall had been held earlier in the day with Brown in make-up, but because the appearance of Flast was altered so much prior to recording, Nathan-Turner asked that the photographs should never be issued.

Saturday 7 July 1984: The Tomb sets were different to those which had appeared in *The Tomb of the Cybermen* and were an element of disappointment for Levine, who had helped with research into the originals; much of this was due to budget restrictions which also disappointed Robinson who had wanted the cells built on tiered scaffolding. The argument put forward by Nathan-Turner for the change was that only the fans – a small proportion of the audience – would realise the difference. The new version was a single level set raised from floor level; the cells which the Cybermen inhabited now had doors rather than the cellophane membrane of the 1967 serial.

Sunday 8 July 1984: The Cryons' set was another multi-level set with stock computer terminals dotted amongst the rocks; the monitors used CSO to allow scenes from *Cyber Control* to be placed into them. Sarah Berger, an experienced Royal Shakespeare Company actress, was amused when Nicola Bryant – a relative television newcomer – gave her suggestions on her performance. Berger and Greene found themselves in hysterics over some of their lines, and also choked on the dry ice mist behind their masks.

The gallery only day was Friday 13 July 1984 in TC2. Editing then took place between Monday 16 and Thursday 26 July. Various cuts were made to both episodes. In Part One, after the Doctor and Peri headed back to the TARDIS, there was a scene in the sewers with Lytton's gang where Griffiths comments on the stench and Lytton hears something; Lytton reminds his group for making a noise ("Perhaps I should buy the pair of you a megaphone. Then you could announce out intentions to the whole world"). The group is watched by a large black figure which emits "the gentle, regular wheezing of a mechanical respirator". A short scene of the Cyber Leader's party making their way through the sewer was cut towards the end of the episode. Removed during editing from Part Two was a short scene at the start of the episode where the Controller was informed that both the TARDIS and their own time vessel were heading for Telos. There was then a sequence where two Cybermen enter a cell in tombs to revive one of their number; the creature suddenly comes to life, forces its comrades back and lurches off down the long gallery. This was lost in a reordering of scenes following both the TARDIS and Stratton/Bates



The very moment that Sevans realised they'd made a mistake in the scaling of their Time Rotor model kit ... © BBC

narratives. After the escape by Peri, Lytton and Griffiths, there were then two more scenes after the encounter with Threst. In the first, the Controller studies the captured Doctor on a screen in the Cyber Lab and comments on why a powerful mind should be housed in such a fragile body; a Cyberman suggests destroying the Doctor, but the Leader says they need him: "You forget our intention. What we have planned will anger the Time Lords of Gallifrey. To have one of their kind hostage may well serve our cause." While Peri is deemed no threat, the Controller says that the Doctor should be disciplined. The next short scene was then of the Doctor being dragged along the Long Gallery by the Cybermen and commenting that he is only made of flesh and blood; "Not for much longer, Doctor," says the Cyber Leader. A short film sequence of two Cybermen discovering the damaged grating where Lytton's party have entered Cyber Control was dropped along with short scenes of the Cybermen pursuing the group inside the ducting and Lytton's group climbing upwards; these scenes were resequenced, leading up to Lytton's capture. This then continued into a scene at the Cryon base where Threst heard of these events. After Plaz's death, there was a scene in the Long Gallery with the Doctor, Peri and the Cryons taking refuge in the cell from the imminent explosion.

❶ The episodes were dubbed on Monday 27 and Tuesday 28 August, and Wednesday 26 and Thursday 27 September 1984

❷ The Drama Early Warning Synopsis was issued on Tuesday 4 December 1984. The closing credits had to be re-edited prior to broadcast because designer Marjorie Pratt had erroneously been credited Marj Pratt. The opening credits also differed from the norm as the story title and writer credit were written entirely in capitals

❸ The novelisation of the serial by Saward added a great deal of background to the events in London, particularly regarding Charlie Griffiths, Joe Payne and Vincent Russell. The story strand concerning Flight Leader Lintus Stratton and Time Navigator Eregous Bates of Hatrey Sedry trying to reach their time ship was also reworked slightly to improve the pacing. Colin Baker recorded an abridged version of this novelisation for BBC Worldwide in Spring 1995; this was issued in August 1995

❹ Attack of the Cybermen was shown in Australia in December 1985 and New Zealand in August 1989. UK Gold screened the serial in its four-part version in October 1994 and as a compilation from December 1994; the serial aired in Germany on VOX in 1995 as *Angriff der Kybermonner*. Harlequin Miniatures released a



Cryon figure in 1999, and the serial was included as part of a limited edition video tin in November 2000, along with part of the Saturday Superstore promotion for its broadcast on Saturday 5 January 1985

❺ In the Credits section, it should be noted that the script by Paula Woolsey and Eric Saward under the pen-name Paula Moore was derived from a story idea by Ian Levine. The dual credit for Vision Mixer is because Nigel Finnis supervised the first block and Dinah Long supervised the second.

Bloody hell ... for Lytton (Maurice Colborne) that is, when he annoys the Cybermen. Ow ow ow! — BBC

Vengeance on Varos

Welcome to the Pleasuredome **BY PAUL CORNELL**



And for the benefit of our younger readers, this is what people looked like back in the burning radioactive wilderness of the 1980s ... — BBC

In the day that the first episode of *Vengeance on Varos* was broadcast, Band Aid's *Do They Know It's Christmas?* ceased to be Number One in the singles chart. That week is almost exactly in the middle of Margaret Thatcher's tenure as British Prime Minister, and Ronald Reagan's as US President. The Nobel Peace Prize that year was to be won by a coalition of International Physicists for the Prevention of Nuclear War. That coming attraction had been scheduled for the previous year, the year when Frankie said "when you hear the air attack warning". Living in Britain in 1985 felt like being a citizen of Rome at its most decadent. In the worst possible way. People have forgotten the dread of living as an adult then, the feeling of moral pollution that caught in its slipstream works as diverse as *Edge of Darkness*, the *New Adventures* and the Vertigo comics line. The state was so extreme back then that the art produced in response to the state had to be equally extreme. These days, it can look quaint – to people who've forgotten the dread ...

Let's talk about a state that distracts its workers from the economy with harsh penalties for lawbreakers, with a row about 'video nasties', with bread and circuses. Let's talk about a media where the lines between audience and entertainment, between entertainment and news, have been horribly blurred. Let's talk about a democracy of the people that's actually a prison for psychotics.

But no, let's talk about *Vengeance on Varos* instead. It's both of its time and ahead of its time. The villains are a bunch of hardcases in Frankie uniforms with a priest and a noose straight out of a pop video. You'd need Adam Ant to hang on those

DWM ARCHIVE

DWM 309

COMMISSIONING

Tue 13 Apr 82 Domain scene breakdown commissioned; delivered by Fri 4 Jun 82
Thu 14 Oct 82 Domain Part One commissioned for Mon 15 Nov 82; delivered Mon 15 Nov 82
Thu 27 Jan 83 Domain Parts Two to Four commissioned for Mon 4 Apr 83; first version delivered Thu 7 Apr 83, second version as two-part *Planet of Fear* delivered Thu 11 Aug 83, third version as two-part *Planet of Fear* delivered Tue 13 Mar 84

PRODUCTION

Wed 18 Jul 84 Television Centre Studio 6: Prison Cell; Corridors H [Desert], M, N, E, Adjacent C; Mortuary; Prison Dome; Planet [model]
Thu 19 Jul 84 Television Centre Studio 6: Prison Dome Corridors A,B; Corridors Z, F [Purple Zone], G, D, I; Corridor Junction
Fri 20 Jul 84 Television Centre Studio 6: Transmutation Cell; Corridor K; Governor's Office
Tue 31 Jul 84 Television Centre Studio 6: Governor's Office [remount]; Eerie Corridor; Prison Corridor; Corridors W, L, M; Corridor to Poison Vines;



Sil (Nabil Shaban) lords it over the Vargons. © BBC

➤ **Poison Vine:** Shaft
Wed 1 Aug 84 Television Centre
Studio 6: PCG; Corridor; Corridor
J; Changing Room
Thu 2 Aug 84 Television Centre
Studio 6: Prison Cell; Gallows
Area; Cell; TARDIS Console

RADIO TIMES

Sat 19 Jan 85 Part One: On Vargos the Doctor learns that video games aren't always fun.
Sat 26 Jan 85 Part Two: Now that the Doctor is a 'star' of a video game, will he survive to show Sil the error of his ways?

gallows. And out of video debauchery come the men in nappies and the half mask and Peri's plumage. Amongst this gaucho, a horribly direct picture is painted of an absolute democracy, where nothing matters but the brute will of the brutish, disenfranchised, uninformed people. All they can do, as the two viewing members of the public put it exactly, is vote.

The only jarring thing in all this is the Doctor himself, an achronal figure who, unlike if this had been a Pertwee story, shares no design with the planet he lands on. He is not 1980s groovy. If he was, he'd be Nick Rhodes with a sash over his shoulder. Instead, he's the victim of 1980s grooviness. His philosophy, as explored in the early TARDIS scenes, may be bleak and accepting of death, but is also honest and unadorned by shallow comforts. Look at that coat, screaming wrongness at you. Look at Peri's outfit, which is plain, and doesn't say horror in a tasty shell. The Doctor is not a hypocrite, and thus he's a magnificently wrong Doctor for the

time when he was the incumbent. This script says there is such a thing as society, and so does he, by being absolutely outside it. His cruel quips and word-plays are almost all a compassionate being can do in the face of this cant. They distance him, and us, from a dirty great rip in goodness, that's got him caught in it as well. He's almost doing the job of a Brechtian narrator, making us look at this as a metaphor, not a story.

Beside him is the great Martin Jarvis; 'honey I'm home from the blandest possible situation comedies of the period, and now being tortured live on TV!' And the great Nabil Shaban, who doesn't want us to forget that he has no legs playing an outsider, an alien, a monster.

And at the end, the regime is going to fall apart anyway, but the proles will still be slaves. So what has the Doctor done, exactly?

Had an adventure in the 1980s, that's what.

ARCHIVE EXTRA

❶ The mashed peaches eaten by Nabil Shaban as Sil gave the actor the runs ... which was very uncomfortable in the costume.

❷ During recording, Nicola Bryant's dressing room was broken into and a tiny accessory which she was wearing on Peri's belt was amongst various items stolen; this was replaced with a different item of a similar colour. A new pair of shoes were also needed

(which had to be painted the same colour as the original pair)

❸ Friday 20 July 1984: Bryant experienced a great deal of discomfort with her transmigration make-up because she was allergic to feathers

❹ Thursday 2 August 1984: With recording running late, Shaban left the studio after his

scenes were completed without having had chance to remove all his make-up. Dashing to get home, he was pulled over by the police who were met with his green face ...

❺ Also included on the DVD of the serial released in September 2001 were a collection of unused scenes, some studio footage and outtakes, the two episode trailers and BBC1 continuity announcements

The Mark of the Rani

Life in a Northern Town **BY LANCE PAAKIN**

DWM ARCHIVE

DWM 217

COMMISSIONING

Fri 30 Sep 83 Too Clever By Far (WJT) scene breakdown commissioned for Sat 31 Oct 83; delivered Sun 1 Nov 83
Mon 7 Nov 83 Enter the Rani (WJT) scripts commissioned for Mon 30 Jan 84

PRODUCTION

Mon 22 Oct 84 Granville Colliery Spoil Heaps, Donnington Wood, Salop (Slag Heap; Redfern Dell Path/Sile; Lane outside Village)
Tue 23 Oct 84 Blists Hill Open Air Museum, Telford, Salop (Village Tavern; Village Bath-house; Pit Gate and Perimeter Fence)
Wed 24 Oct 84 Blists Hill Open Air Museum (Pit Gate; Perimeter Fence; Workshop; Derrick at Quayside)
Thu 25 Oct 84 Blists Hill Open Air Museum (Pit Shaft; Pit Gate; Perimeter Fence)
Fri 26 Oct 84 Blists Hill Open Air Museum (Village Bath-house; Hill; Old Pit Shaft/Turntable; Bank near Old Pit)
Sat 27 Oct 84 Blists Hill Open Air Museum (Redfern Vale; Lane to Old Pit; Pit Shaft; Old Pit Head)
Mon 29 Oct 84 Coalport China Works, Coalport, Salop (Pit ➤



The wretched Rani (Kate O'Mara) and the malevolent Master (Anthony Ainley) make a pit stop! © BBC

The Mark of the Rani harks back to the past in more ways than one. As well as its historical setting, it's an old-fashioned slice of Doctor Who. Like their later stories, Pip and Jane Baker are trying to do Doctor Who by numbers – their first stab, though, touches on a couple of interesting ideas that really stand out. It's a story that's clearly trying to educate, one that isn't afraid to use big words.

Season Twenty-Two either got more money than the previous few seasons, or they'd learned how to spend it better; plus, the story benefited from an accounting error that granted some extra location filming. Coupled with some clever design, costuming, music and direction, the story looks positively lavish, as good as any Catherine Cookson mini-series. It's the last time that Doctor Who looks like the other television drama of its time, before switching to video. The studio scenes aren't quite as impressive, but the Rani's bathhouse and Stephenson's workshop are both lovely, and the Rani's extremely 1980s TARDIS is very fitting.

The use of language is among the most ambitious the TV series saw, with the writers going out of their way to distinguish between the miners, their bosses, Peri and the Time Lords. There's been much fan merriment about the baroque dialogue, but it's only the Doctor, Master and Rani who use the long Latinate words ('A sentiment he'd reciprocate!' 'Fortuitous would be a more apposite epithet!'). Pip and Jane are suggesting that immortal academics would speak in big words. Which is fair enough. The miners have their own distinct way of speaking, a weird mix of When the Boat Comes In and the Monty Python trouble at r'mill sketch – this is a story with the opening line "Why no, man. I don't think I've

strength to lift a Toby," and has 'business' lines like "D'ost thou think we should cancel t'meeting?" This emphasis on language is deliberate – both the Doctor and Master come up with Americanisms to mock Peri with – and it's a nice change to have a regional accent. If anything, they could have gone further with it – have Peri struggling to understand Georgie (or, indeed, have someone notice she's an American), or one of the Rani's servants failing to obey an order because he didn't understand a blithering word she was saying).

There are some strange decisions. Only Doctor Who would bring an unconvincing rubber tree into a beautiful real forest (why not just use a real tree, eh?), and doing Doctor Who by numbers means that, as the girly companion, Peri's never more useless – throwing small bits of coal at an advancing mob, or flapping her arms around instead of doing much that might help.

The big void, though, is the story. As with a lot of this season, they don't make the most of the 45-minute format. The Mark of the Rani feels like a normal two-parter padded out to double its natural length. The story is linear and lightweight, full of repetition (the Master gets about ten scenes where he reminds the Rani he has her bottle of precious fluid, and twice sees the red marks on the rioters' necks, both times breathing "The mark of the Rani!" in exactly the same way.

ARCHIVE EXTRA

▶ Pip and Jane Baker's introduction into the Doctor Who world came about via their work with Graham Williams, John Nathan-Turner's predecessor as producer. The Bakers had worked with Williams on series such as *Z Cars* and *The Double Dealers* and had contributed a script for *The Zodiac Factor*, a filmed thriller anthology which Williams had been hoping to make as a BBC/FOX co-production in 1976. The series was never made, but Nathan-Turner found their script for *The Zodiac Factor*, *Art Froud*, in the producers' office when he took over on Doctor Who. Impressed by the script, he contacted the Bakers. The couple were not interested in writing for Doctor Who at first and really wanted to discuss new series formats with Nathan-Turner; Williams had invited them to contribute to the series several times between 1976 and 1979, but they had declined. Their only knowledge of Doctor Who had been seeing the first episode in 1963 and they were unaware of its cult status. Nathan-Turner loaned them tapes of the series to help familiarise them.

▶ It was Eric Seward who suggested that the story could feature the Master and be set in a historical era on Earth; the Bakers decided to introduce a heavy element of true science and were briefed by Seward and Nathan-Turner that the Doctor could not interfere with established Earth history. Nathan-Turner was considering the Rani as a potential villain to replace the Master whom he feared was becoming too clichéd.

▶ The setting for the serial was derived from the Baker's selection of the Luddite riots as the backdrop. The Luddites, named after Ned Ludd, were machine smashers active in England from around 1812 to 1818. Although no definite date was given on screen, the Bakers set their serial at the time of Waterloo, indicating a date of 1815, but the production team saw the setting as around 1830. In real history, George Stephenson was born in 1781 and built his first steam engine, the *Blucher*, in 1813, having worked at Killingworth since 1812 as engine-wright. In 1821, he was appointed engineer of the Stockton and

Darlington mineral railway which opened in September 1825. Pip Baker found the research into Stephenson and his early life of poverty fascinating, but since the focus of the script had to be the Doctor there was no room to work this in; the script describes Stephenson as being in "his early thirties". Lord Ravensworth did not receive his barony until July 1821, before which he was Sir Thomas Liddell; he was a partner in the Grand Allies consortium with a number of colleagues and had been supervisor of all machinery at Killingworth West Moor since 1812, having been there since 1807. In their script, the Bakers described Lord Ravensworth as a "portly, well-dressed" man.

▶ Four other scientists of the day were referred to in the script: Sir Humphry Davy, Michael Faraday, Thomas Telford and James Watt. Made a baronet in 1818, chemist Humphry Davy was best known for his development of the safety lamp in 1815; this rivalled Stephenson's own work and the relationship between the two men was not good. Faraday, an English chemist and philosopher, had been Davy's assistant since 1813 and was only just starting to earn a reputation with experiments in electromagnetism in 1821. Scottish engineer Telford had a distinguished career in transport engineering – notably the Menai Suspension Bridge – and did not apparently meet Stephenson until 1829. Watt, another Scots inventor, had been instrumental in developing steam as a motive force in the late eighteenth century, and retired in 1800, dying in 1819. The Doctor refers to Stephenson's Rocket, which reached an incredible speed of 30 mph in a competition in October 1829. A deleted scene refers to the Doctor and Peri visiting the official opening of Kew Gardens; the gardens were made a royal gift to the nation in 1841.

▶ The element of the Baker's storyline about drugs and sleep inducement was inspired by an article which the couple had read in *New Scientist*; they had also written about the side effects of drugs in their episode of *The Expert* seven years earlier. The Rani was

Perhaps the big theme of Doctor Who is science prevailing over superstition, and what better place to depict that than by showing Luddites opposing the industrial revolution? But the whole point of the rioters here is that it's mindless violence – it's not even part of the Rani's plan, just a side-effect. The Master, in particular, just seems to be wandering around, like a kid bunking off school for the afternoon. His aims are nebulous at best – he dreams of controlling the greatest minds of the Industrial Revolution, but doesn't do anything about it. For all the production's lovely period detail, the story could happily take place anywhere, really. There's no deadline or countdown to add tension to the last episode, and so there's no big climax to the story – it ends when the Master and Rani get around to going back to her TARDIS, which the Doctor sabotaged ages ago. The Doctor doesn't seem unduly worried to be leaving behind various bits of the Rani's equipment – including a dell full of landmines. He was keen to meet all the geniuses at the beginning, so why doesn't he stay for the meeting?

It's a shame *The Mark of the Rani* came at a time in the show's history where gimmicks and surface were being given more priority than story and script. It suffers from a number of faults that were common to Season Twenty-Two, but it's beautifully made, and is far more ambitious than it's usually given credit for.

inspired by a neurochemist friend of the Bakers' whom they observed in an argument with another more sentimental friend of theirs. The chemist had stated "All you are is chemicals", to which the other friend replied "But what about the soul?" This inspired the Bakers to have the Rani view humanity as nothing more than laboratory animals.

▶ In Part One when the Doctor and Peri notice that the dog has stopped barking, the Doctor quotes "There was silence deep as death" from Scots poet Thomas Campbell's 1801 work *The Battle of the Bannockburn*. The script for Part Two had the Doctor saying "Gather ye rosebuds while ye may ..." from Robert Herrick's 1638 poem *To Virgins, To Moke Much of Time*, "Will you walk into my parlour said the spider to the fly ..." from Mary Howitt's 1829 piece *The Spider and the Fly* and quoting "more things in heaven and Earth" from William Shakespeare's *Hamlet*.



"Come on in whilst t'water's hot ..." Now there's an offer!

© BBC

➤ Office/Pit Workshop
Tue 30 Oct & Blisls Hill Open Air Museum [Redfern Vale:
Woods/Field/Ridge; Redfern Dell]
Wed 31 Oct & Blisls Hill Open Air Museum [Redfern Vale:
Beneath Oak/Copse; Redfern Dell]
Thu 1 Nov & Blisls Hill Open Air Museum [Redfern Dell; Disused Mine Working; Redfern Vale: Lane]
Fri 2 Nov & Blisls Hill Open Air Museum [standby day]
Mon 12 Nov & Park Wood, Ruislip, Middx [Redfern Vale; Redfern Dell (remount)]
Sun 18 Nov & Television Centre Studio 1: Bathroom: Chamber/Hall/Lab; Office; TARDIS Console Room
Mon 19 Nov & Television Centre Studio 1: Disused Mine Working Entrance; Bathroom: Lab/Chamber/Hall; Rani's TARDIS

The Doctor attempts to explain how Peri's costume has managed to be even more hideous than his own. © BBC





"Set course for the eighties!"
The Rani at the helm of her lovely MFI TARDIS! © BBC

➔ Tue 20 Nov 84: Television Centre Studio 1: Brick Wall Flat; Workshop; Office; Rani's TARDIS; Workshop; Disused Mine Entrance; CSO sequences

RADIO TIMES

Sat 2 Feb 85 Part One: With the Luddites rioting, the Doctor arrives on Earth – but are they responsible for the trouble at Lord Ravensworth's coalmine?
Sat 9 Feb 85 Part Two: With the Rani and the Master in uneasy alliance, the Doctor and Peri could be in for a "sleepless" life.

Trolley good: the Doctor is saved from being shafted thanks to George Stephenson (Gawn Grainger). © BBC

➔ On Monday 5 March 1984, Seward wrote to the Bakers indicating that he and Nathan-Turner had now read the script and would like to discuss it further. After some talks, the Bakers submitted a revised version of the script – with an increased film allocation – around Monday 21 May. Seward contacted the couple again on Wednesday 6 June to discuss a few further changes; after this, Seward made a series of cuts to the script and sent a revised version back to the Bakers on Tuesday 17 July, hoping they'd be happy with the trims

➔ Sarah Hellings was engaged as the director on Friday 20 January 1984 and formally joined the production on Tuesday 28 August. On receiving the script, Hellings was thrilled, but also amazed by the volume of special effects required by it. She enjoyed the Bakers' dialogue which dealt with issues of good and evil

➔ John Lewis, who originally scored the serial, was engaged on the serial on Thursday 29 March 1984.

➔ On Wednesday 6 June 1984, Anthony Ainley was engaged as the Master

➔ Reading the script, Hellings wanted Kate O'Mara as the Rani and asked Nathan-Turner if he thought there would be sufficient budget to attract an actress of O'Mara's calibre. Nathan-Turner's first choice for the role was Sarah Badel whom he had worked with on *The Pollsters* in 1974, and he offered her the role on Friday 13 July 1984. Badel replied on Thursday 26 July, saying that while she could see that the Rani "is going to turn into a whizz kid and attract a cult following of her own", she couldn't do justice to the part and suggested Eleanor Brown instead

➔ O'Mara was Nathan-Turner's second choice for the role, and was engaged on the serial on Tuesday 4 September. However, the producer was so impressed with her that she sounded her out about a return appearance

towards the end of the location shoot at Blists Hill after he had done location scouting in Singapore for a new Rani serial

➔ Although the Bakers suggested that the location filming could be done at an open-air mining museum they knew of in South Wales, Hellings had previously done two filmed items at Blists Hills for *Blue Peter*; the first being *The Story of Ironbridge* broadcast Thursday 16 February 1978. A recce at Blists Hill was conducted from Monday 15 to Wednesday 17 October

➔ Rehearsals for filming began on Thursday 18 October with the Bakers in attendance for a read-through at the Conference Room in Threshold House; rehearsals for studio recording then ran from Monday 5 November. At the time, Gawn Grainger – who played George Stephenson – was writing a biography of Sir Laurence Olivier, and it was jokingly suggested that the famous classical actor might want to play a small cameo role in *Doctor Who* which required only a day's filming. The Shakespeare dialogue in the bath-house between the Doctor and Peri was a late addition to Part Two; the Doctor quotes "Cowards die many times before their death" from the 1599 play *Julius Caesar* while Peri's "Discretion is the better part of valour" derives from 1597's *Henry IV Part One*

➔ Tuesday 23 October 1984: O'Mara's old woman disguise comprised foundation and old-age stipple; the make-up was so effective that nobody realised who she was during the freezing morning shoot and none of the crew offered to get her a chair or a cup of tea

➔ Wednesday 24 October 1984: Because of the phallic shape of the prop, Hellings and her crew found the shot of the Master using his Tissue Compression Eliminator hilarious

➔ Thursday 25 October 1984: Because of the poor weather, the Bakers were asked to rewrite approximately ten minutes of the

script to transfer some sequences back into the studio

➔ Friday 26 October 1984: There were two identical trolleys which the Doctor was strapped to, both made by visual effects assistant George Reed. One of these housed visual effects assistant Tom Davis who would steer the trolley on its perilous journey

➔ Saturday 27 October 1984: For the scene where the Doctor had to make his face grimy as an excuse to take a bath, Baker was given a tray of Fuller's Earth to apply the dirt. Unfortunately, a dog had already found the tray and made good use of it ...

➔ Tuesday 30 October 1984: The visual effects tree which grabbed Peri was operated from inside by Tom Davis

➔ Wednesday 31 October 1984: After a dismal day of shooting in an attempt to catch up, the crew enjoyed a Halloween Party organised by the make-up team at their base hotel in Shrewsbury

➔ Monday 12 November 1984: For the remounted scenes, the Bakers suggest location of Park Wood which was just a few minutes from their home in Kuislip. An elderly couple walking their dog were most amused to come across the lonely Baker, who had been left suspended on a pole between two trees

➔ Studio recordings ran from 2.30pm to 6.00pm and from 7.30pm to 10.00pm, apart from Sunday 18 November where the afternoon session ended at 5.15pm

➔ Sunday 18 November 1984: The Rani's maggots were actually made of rolled up marzipan

➔ Tuesday 20 November 1984: There was an over-run of 16 minutes required to complete recording; this was as a result of trying to take the material deferred from the location shoot

➔ A gallery only session on the serial was held on Wednesday 28 November, with editing from Monday 3 to Thursday 13 December; the episodes were then dubbed on Thursday 10 and Friday 11 January 1985, and Monday 11 and Tuesday 12 February 1985

➔ The Mark of the Rani was shown in Australia in December 1985 and New Zealand in October 1986. UK Gold screened the serial in its four-part version in October 1994 and as a compilation from January 1995; it aired in Germany on VOX in 1995 as *Die Rache des Meisters (The Revenge of the Master)*. The serial was issued on videotape by BBC Worldwide in July 1995; Colin Howard's artwork for the cover later appeared on a postcard from Slowdazzle in 1999. Timecoded U-matic copies of the first edits exist for both episodes in a private collection

➔ In the Extras section, further identification of some artistes is now possible. Zophanie Vasquez Howard was Woman Customer; John Poyner, Neville Clark, Ian McFarlane, Terry Pearson, Barry Jones and Dave Lee-Jay were Aggressors; Terence Coton and Clive Cartwright were Guards; Dave Mitty was Peddler; Tony Dell was Boy; Gordon Young was Guard (Harry); Gordon Coulson was Possibility



The Two Doctors

The Heat is On **BY ROBERT SHERRMAN**



In 1984 Mike Hudson, BBC production assistant, suffered a strained back in Shropshire. He went to see an osteopath – and, as he was soothed by her no doubt tender hands, told her what his job was. Shortly afterwards I had a phone call from Owen Rywater, my best friend: he said Doctor Who, and he had promised that we two fans could visit the recording!

As it turned out, on 27 September, Mike Hudson assisted on the scene where Oscar Botcherby is stabbed to death by Shockeys o' the Qwancing Grig in a restaurant. As controversial moments go, this one takes the biscuit – reviled by many as the point at which you can see Doctor Who crash off the rails into indefensible tastelessness. I adore it. Robert Holmes had been writing larger than life characters like Oscar for years, and they'd all been untouchable, their deaths as inconceivable as the Doctor's would be. But Oscar does die – and he dies making jokes about dissatisfied customers usually not leaving tips, and worrying over the safety of his moth collection. In its subtle

"I'll get you, Noel Edmonds ..." © BBC

way, his death is as shocking as Adric's – it savagely breaks the programme's safe conventions, but this time by inviting us to laugh at what should seem tragic. It is the purest example of black comedy in a series which usually dares only to flirt with it. And just as Voss made us question our fascination with violence, so Holmes performs the same trick more cleverly: Troughton does a little childish dance when a lorry driver is clubbed down, and we laugh – only later do we realise that the blow killed him. The comedy in *The Two Doctors* burts.

Robert Holmes' popularity amongst Doctor Who fans had never been greater than when this story was broadcast – his return to the programme to script Davison's devastating finale quite rightly feted as a highlight of the entire series. We felt baffled by *The Two Doctors* in all its gaudy naughtiness – Androzani it ain't. And on the face of it, it isn't much like anything else Holmes had ever written either; not as hired hand nor as script editor when he honed and refined what a Doctor Who story should be. There is little that is boned or refined here, but I think it's the definitive Holmes adventure; the one time we see the greatest writer of the series let off the leash and writing for the sheer pleasure of it. Just compare this to his time-serving duties on *Trial*, when his wings had been clipped again. Holmes takes the heavy commission requirements of Spain, Sontarans and Troughton, and instead writes a comedy about a race obsessed with eating. It gives a fair idea of how Holmes would have written his twentieth anniversary special, finding a way around the concept and presenting something entirely different.

It is self-indulgent, yes. It may be Holmes' finest hour – but the whole story lasts two and a half. The pacing is slack, lots of the plotting is irrelevant, it does seem at times to have abandoned all structure. But it's giddily brilliant – the one Doctor Who story brave enough to be a celebration of dialogue over everything else. The darkness of Holmes' great comic folly is offset by the sheer exuberance of a writer just having freewheeling fun. It's not Holmes' best script, but I do think it's his truest, his most personal. And the only one, in its perverse and frustrating way, that ever sees a self-confessed jobbing BBC scriptwriter push towards sequences of pure genius. The death of Oscar is the most inspired example of it – hilarious, shocking, and thoroughly macabre.

I didn't attend the recording. My parents said I couldn't take the day off school – certainly not for a children's TV programme I was bound to grow out of soon. Owen had a great time.

DWM ARCHIVE

DWM 195

COMMISSIONING

Mon 13 Feb 84 *The Kroalun Inheritance* Part One commissioned for Mon 5 Mar 84
Fri 9 Mar 84 *The Kroalun Inheritance* Parts Two and Three commissioned

PRODUCTION

Thu 9 – Fri 10 Aug 84 Dehera Boyar, nr Gerena, Spain [Olive Grove/Hacienda]
Sat 11 Aug 84 Dehera Boyar [Rough Roads/Hacienda]
Sun 12 Aug 84 Dehera Boyar [Olive Grove/Hacienda]
Mon 13 – Tue 14 Aug 84 Plaza de Dona Elvira/Vida/Calle Pimiento/Justina de Neva/Plaza de Los Venerables/Plaza Plancia/Hotel Monreal, Santa Cruz, Seville, Spain [Main Square/Seville Streets/Oscar's Restaurant]
Thu 16 Aug 84 Rio Guadamar, nr Gerena [River]; Country Road, [Road with Trees]; Dehera Boyar [Olive Grove (remount)]
Thu 30 Aug 84 Television Centre Studio 1: Space Station Corridors A-B, C-D; Baker TARDIS; Dastari's Study
Fri 31 Aug 84 Television Centre Studio 1: Troughton TARDIS; Space Station: Kitchen Area/Computer Room; Torture Scene; Dastari's Study
Thu 15 Sep 84 Television Centre Studio 6: Cellars
Fri 14 Sep 84 Television Centre Studio 6: Cellars; Out Building; Passage
Thu 27 Sep 84 Television Centre Studio 6: Restaurant; Infrastructure; High Level Infrastructure



Chessene (Jacqueline Pearce) and Dastari (Laurence Payne) discover the only way to travel in Seville, darling! © BBC

ARCHIVE EXTRA

● The original notion of an overseas story set in America was developed by Lesley Elizabeth Thomas, a writer from Los Angeles who was working in London as an adviser on soap-opera formats. John Nathan-Turner made his first visit to New Orleans during Mardi Gras at the start of March 1981 and had a breakdown commissioned from Thomas on Thursday 23 April 1981. The producer was aware that the show was becoming more popular in America at the time, and felt that such a serial would be attractive to the North American distributor, Lionheart. Thomas' story, *Woy Down Yonder*, was still under consideration in November 1981, but did not have the true

Doctor Who quality that Nathan-Turner and Eric Saward wanted

● Peter Moffatt was engaged to direct Serial 6W on Tuesday 1 November 1983, with Patrick Troughton booked for the story three days later. Frazer Hines was booked on Tuesday 24 January 1984

● Thursday 26 January 1984: A four-page document outlining the cost of shooting for ten days in New Orleans on Serial 6W was compiled for consideration

● In developing the serial, Robert Holmes drew upon a notion from his abandoned

storyline, *The Six Doctors*, which he had developed in 1982 for the twentieth anniversary serial. In this, the Cybermen had captured the Doctors and decided to operate on the second Doctor ("Doctor Pat"). This was in order to isolate the genetic make-up which separates the Time Lords from other species, allowing them to time-travel and become Cyberlords

● Wednesday 15 February 1984: Nathan-Turner requested additional funding from BBC Enterprises to shoot *The Two Doctors* in America; BBC Enterprises had expressed interest in this and already contributed partially to the budget of *Doctor Who*

Wednesday 29 February 1984: Troughton and Hines were contracted. Reading the script in late May, Troughton requested a "running double" for the location filming and put forward a gag about his Doctor struggling through market crowds and having a different hat every time he appeared

Monday 16 April 1984: With the scripts having been delivered in late March, Ronnie Marsh, the special assistant to the Head of Drama indicated that no more money than usual would be available for *The Two Doctors*. Nathan-Turner urged Holmes to continue working on his scripts a fortnight later, but Holmes indicated that until he knew the new location he could not judge the amount of rewriting. The next venue that the team considered was Venice, and then production associate Sue Anstruther suggested Spain. Holmes was briefed on the serial – now known as *The Androgynous Inheritance* – by Thursday 3 May. The change of venue meant that Holmes had to rework various elements of dialogue which had made humorous plays on the differences between American and English speech. The serial was retitled *The Two Doctors* by Tuesday 15 May; other suggested titles which do not appear on BBC paperwork include *Panorlux*, *The Seventh Augmentation* and *Cretion*. On Wednesday 20 June, Jonathan Powell commented that the first script seemed very enjoyable

Peter Moffatt joined the production two weeks early on Monday 14 May. He was concerned about the level of violence in the script and felt it was unsuitable and would therefore be cut, but found that Nathan-Turner was quite happy with it

Jean Marsh was originally offered the role of Chessene by Nathan-Turner but turned it down because it was too similar to the part she had just played in *Return to Oz*. Elizabeth Spriggs, who was then cast as Chessene, was dropped from production when she did not agree to attend rehearsals at Acton for the Spanish filming; these rehearsals began on Saturday 4 August and Spriggs was dropped around the start of July. Moffatt recalled Jacqueline Pearce from a play they had worked on together for Yorkshire Television; she agreed to replace Spriggs on Monday 16 July and was contracted two days later. Laurence Payne had effectively retired from acting by this time, but accepted the invitation of working in Spain from Moffatt

In early July with the budget worked out, Nathan-Turner issued a memo to cast and crew about the deal being offered for Spanish filming. Without the extra funding, the budget was still minimal and it was proposed that corners were cut in terms of accommodation and daily expenses; however, a number of hotel facilities would still be available. It was essential that anyone who was not prepared to accept this offer informed him as soon as possible

A read-through was held in the Conference Room at Threshold House on Tuesday 31 July, with location rehearsals on Friday 3 and Saturday 4 August in Room 202 at Acton. The crew exploited Baker's fear of spiders when Saward prepared a special joke script for the actor in which the Doctor was to be imprisoned in a cell full of the creatures. This later led to make-up artist Cathy Davies

and the visual effects team rigging up spiders all over Baker's dressing room. Hines was delighted that he was able to put his own jokes into the script such as Jamie referring to an "Androgum" as a "Hungry Man"

Sunday 5 August 1984: A recte party travelled to Spain to scout locations. The team received a lot of help from the travel firm of Mundi-Color. Downie had originally settled on using the run-down Cortijos in El Garrabo as the Hacienda, but on his way back to base that day saw the Dehera Boyar near Gerena. This was the venue which Moffatt preferred. The building was in the process of being purchased by Joanna Hearst, the aunt of famed kidnapper victim Pattie Hearst. The main drawback to the location was that it was a two-hour drive from the Seville hotel each day. Shooting would generally have an early start, and the cast and crew had to drink a great deal to retain sufficient fluids in the summer heat

Thursday 9 August 1984: Nathan-Turner suggested shooting two studio scenes from Part One on location when production was ahead of schedule

Friday 10 August 1984: The BBC visual effects team were not allowed to bring pyrotechnics into Spain for the explosion of the Sontaran ship, and had to arrange to buy these from Madrid – 250 miles away – at the start of the shoot. When it became clear that the suppliers could not fulfil the order on time – and with the Spanish fire brigade booked to be in attendance – the team improvised by buying raw gunpowder from a firearms shop and making their own explosives

Monday 13/Tuesday 14 August 1984: Shooting in Santa Cruz generally took place around the Hospital Venerables, with Moffatt and Mercedes Carnegie doing their cameos at the Bar Hosteria del Laurel

Thursday 16 August 1984: Scenes originally shot on Thursday 9 August with Oscar and Anita were remounted this day after Nathan-Turner had been informed



from London that the film had been scratched; the producer later discovered that the scratch was barely visible and the remount unnecessary. The cast and crew returned to London on Friday 17 August. Recording in the evenings ran from 7.30pm to 10.00pm; most days also had an afternoon recording from 2.30pm to 6.00pm, apart from Thursday 30 August

Friday 14 September 1984: Recording was attended by the Radio 4 programme *Wavelength*, produced by Peter Brown. Recording overrun by 15 minutes to complete scenes on the cellar and tunnel sets, with delays caused by time consuming effects and make-up changes. Payne and Troughton suffered from a fit of the giggles during the operating scenes

A gallery only session took place on Thursday 4 and Friday 5 October, with editing from Tuesday 16 October to Tuesday 13 November. Dubbing of the episodes was performed on Sunday 9 and Monday 10 December, Monday 7 and Tuesday 8 January 1985 and Monday 28 and Tuesday 29 January

Wednesday 31 October 1984: Nathan-Turner offered *The Late Late Breakfast Show* an

The Doctor attempts to deactivate the defence systems of space station Camera. © BBC

Fri 28 Sep 84 Television Centre Studio 6: Chapel; Hallway; Kitchen; Bedroom

RADIO TIMES

Sat 16 Feb 85 Part One: Even when aided by a former regeneration of himself, can the Doctor prevent Dastari's illegal experiments in time from reaching fruition?

Sat 23 Feb 85 Part Two: With the aid of the Sontarans, Dastari has secured a base in Spain, but not, alas, to bask in the sun. Sat 2 Mar 85 Part Three: With the two Doctors held by Dastari, a question of food arises.

The Second Doctor (Patrick Troughton) sleeps off his failed augmentation – and several bottles of red ... © BBC





The Doctor and Jamie confront Dastari about his illegal time experiments. He doesn't look happy about it, does he? © BBC

outtake from the serial when Hines' kit became caught in a door

• The role of Varl was the first television work for Tim Raynham. He later enthusiastically thanked Nathan-Turner for giving him

the break and suggested that he could be considered as replacement for Bryant as a companion. To demonstrate this, he submitted a BBC postcard of Peri with a shot of his own face pasted over Bryant's!

• In the incidental music, Peter Howell took the chance to weave Ron Grainer's Doctor Who theme into cues, such as the Doctor opening the door of Dastari's office in Part One. The score ran to about 40 minutes, including the guitar music played by Les Thatcher which was recorded at Maida Vale on Wednesday 28 November

• Other cuts were made to Part One. A short piece of film of the Doctor and Peri returning to the TARDIS was dropped, as was a scene in the TARDIS of the Doctor and Peri looking at the kitchen on the scanner. When the Doctor says that the mess could be because the Androgums are on strike, Peri asks who he is referring to: "They were the original inhabitants in this part of the galaxy," explains the Doctor, "You might compare them with the Australopithecus. Third Zoners used them to do most of the manual work". Peri says this sounds very

hard on the Androgums, but the Doctor says they have had a million years to get used to this. They both have a feeling that something is wrong

• The *Two Doctors* was shown in Australia in December 1985 and New Zealand in September 1986. The serial was released on videotape by BBC Enterprises in November 1993; this was a single tape release although it had originally been announced as a two-tape set. The cover painting was by Colin Howard. UK Gold screened the serial in its six-part version in October 1994 and as a compilation from January 1995; the serial aired on VOX in 1995 as *Andriiden* in Seville (*Andriids* in Seville). Harlequin Miniatures issued figures of Stike and Shockeye in 1999. The BBC hold a longer first edit of Part One (duration 47'38")

• In the Extras section, further identification of some artistes is now possible. Nedjet Salih and Michael Eriera were Writers at Los Codmas; Iris Everson, Maria Eldridge, Patrick Edwards, John Holland, Tim Milsom, Glynis Simmons and June Easther were Patrons at Los Codmas

Timelash

Money's Too Tight To Mention **BY PHILIP MACDONALD**

OWN ARCHIVE

DWM 231

COMMISSIONING

Wed 11 May 83 *Timelash* scene breakdown commissioned for Tue 31 May 83
Fri 24 Jun 83 *Timelash* (W/T) Part One commissioned for Mon 25 Jul 83; delivered Jul 83
Wed 23 Nov 83 *Timelash* (W/T) Part Two commissioned

PRODUCTION

Tue 4 Dec 84 Television Centre Studio 4: TARDIS Console Room; Reception Chamber
Wed 5 Dec 84 Television Centre Studio 4: Inner Sanctum; Citadel Corridor; Corridor outside Inner Sanctum
Thu 6 Dec 84 Television Centre Studio 4: Corridor outside Inner Sanctum; Citadel Corridor; Inner Sanctum; Detention Room
Wed 19 Dec 84 Television Centre Studio 8: Detention Room; Country Cabin; Tunnel; Rebel Camp; Power Vault/Corridor Outside
Tue 20 Dec 84 Television Centre Studio 8: Borad's Vault; Passage above Vault; Corridor Outside
Fri 21 Dec 84 Television Centre Studio 8: Borad's Vault; *Timelash*; Citadel Corridor; Tunnel; model shots
Wed 30 Jan 85 Television Centre Studio 8: TARDIS Console Room (remount)



Doctor Who in beautifully-realised monster shock! Behold the Borad and weep, ye wretches ... © BBC

Time And The Rani? Enough said. *Death Comes To Time?* Not for me to say, guv.

Naturally there are exceptions which prove the rule. The *Time Meddler* and *The Time Warrior* are a pair of nifty little historical romps, each nicely crafted and ahead of its, er, time. But more often than not, the dreaded T-word is a badge of dishonour, and that's certainly true in the case of *Timelash*, a story whose title has become a byword for the extreme and upsetting rubbishness that occurs when Doctor Who goes totally pear-shaped.

To the fan's refined palate, *Timelash* is the corked bottle in Château Who's 1985 cellar. The list of things that are rubbish about it represents a distillation of everything that's potentially rubbish about Season Twenty-Two as a whole, writ uncomfortably large and unredeemed by any of that year's better features (high production values, good casting, handsome location work, stylish direction). Instead we're left with the season's very worst ingredients. The silly, gimcrack set designs. The boring, irritating TARDIS scenes. The pointless and infuriating obsession with "continuity", here reaching a new nadir with a scene which requires us to assume that, between adventures, the Doctor is prone to sitting his companions down and showing them photos of their predecessors. The unforgivable misbehaviour of the guest star. The scarcely more pardonable acting of the less experienced cast (in true Season Twenty-Two style, the youngster with the brightest talent, future star Steven Mackintosh, gets about four-and-a-half lines before being unceremoniously bumped off – see also Owen Teale in *Vengeance* on Viro). The awful, stilted dialogue (all together now: "What, all five hundred of us?"). The spectacle of interplanetary war being depicted by a glove-puppet cobra who'd look more at home on Pipkins. Against such an array of buffoonery, a nicely realised villain and one of the decade's best radiophonic scores offer scant compensation.

And yet, and yet ... For all its failings, *Timelash* succeeds in

There's a singular phenomenon, long acknowledged in the annals of fan lore, which states that any Doctor Who story which has the misfortune to include the word "time" in its title is more or less guaranteed to be a bit of a disaster. The *Time Monster*, for instance, exposes the softest, silliest aspects of the Pertwee era while capturing precious little of its drama or charm. The Invasion of Time is guilty of a similar faux-pas with regard to the Tom Baker format. *Time-Flight?* Er, no, thanks.

being more recognisably Doctor Who than some of its bedfellows. It's a rather flabby and uninspired tale to be sure, but it's an accessible, straight-down-the-line slice of Who which has the potential to please its audience far more readily than the continuity-strangled likes of *Attack of the Cybermen* or the experimental textures of *Varos* and *Revelation*. I know this because I can recall more than one non-fan informing me in 1985 that *Timelash* was the best story of the season.

And therein lies the truth, however unpalatable: in essence, *Timelash* isn't actually that much worse than the rest of Doctor Who. It just happens to be unfortunate in punching every single one of the obvious fan-embarrassment buttons in one fell swoop. If you were to show a double bill of *Timelash* and, say, *Revelation* of the Daleks to the average Joe Public, the fabled

Not-We whose contribution to the viewing figures means so very much to us, it's highly unlikely that he'd perceive any qualitative difference at all between the two stories. Not because he's stupid or lacking in discernment, but because he harbours none of the possessive and protective instincts that make *Timelash* seem overly embarrassing to us and which, at the same time, make *Revelation* seem disproportionately brilliant. Once we accept this, we might be on the way towards admitting that the important distinction isn't between good and bad Doctor Who, but between good and bad television.

Sadly, it appears that the production team learned little from the 18-month cancellation. After taking a holiday, they tragically set about making a 14-part story with the word "time" in its title. The great twerps.

ARCHIVE EXTRA

● The first episode of *Timelash* was commissioned in June 1983 as the first of four 25-minute episodes; Glen McCoy's agents then chased Eric Seward up four months after its delivery to see if the second episode was required. By this time, the new 45-minute format had been decided upon

● On receiving the scripts, director Pennant Roberts was disappointed that the dialogue of the Karfelon natives did not seem right for an alien planet. Originally when the TARDIS materialised in the Inner Sanctum, the script noted that Tekker, Kendron and Brunner vacated the room, walking out into the corridor but then entering the Sanctum again immediately; Seward shifted all the corridor material back into the Sanctum. Seward sent a revised version of the Part Two script to McCoy on Friday 9 November 1984

● Paul Darrow was cast after John Nathan-Turner met him at an American science-fiction convention and the pair got on well. When seeing the excesses of Darrow's Richard III interpretation of Tekker, Nathan-Turner and Roberts worked out ways to limit the performance, which was not what they had hoped for. Roberts offered the part of Vena to Susan Woodbridge on Tuesday 30 October, but when she rejected the part he cast Jeananne Crowley with whom he had worked on *Tenko*. Katz was not cast until a week before rehearsals, and Jason Litterer was originally cast as Gazak. The second set of rehearsals began on Friday 7 December, with McCoy attending on Tuesday 18 December as he had done on Wednesday 21 November

● The Bandrill puppet was sculpted by Stan Mitchell; during production this was also referred to as the "Mantrill Ambassador". The Drama Early Warning Synopsis was issued on Tuesday 4 December 1984

● Wednesday 19 December 1984: Nicola Bryant disliked the scenes where Peri was tied to a stake in the Morlox cave and left to scream since she felt that these undermined her character. Nathan-Turner indicated that these were key scenes, and one of them would probably form a cliffhanger in an overseas syndication version

● Thursday 20 December 1984: Recording on this day was delayed by 15 minutes when the sets were not ready in the afternoon

● Friday 21 December 1984: For the scenes in the Kontron tunnel, Baker wore a Kirby's Flying Ballet harness, while safety lines were

also secured to Eric Deacon and David Chandler. There was an over-run of nine minutes to complete recording

● Wednesday 30 January 1984: Recording of the additional TARDIS scene was delayed for 23 minutes when a new lead was required for the TARDIS console. This remount was scheduled for 11.30am to 12.15pm

● The gallery-only session took place on Saturday 29 December 1984, with editing from Wednesday 2 to Monday 14 January 1985. The two episodes were then dubbed on Sunday 17 and Monday 18 February, and Sunday 3 and Monday 4 March

● Few of the cast and crew of *Timelash* were happy with the finished result. Colin Baker felt that the Doctor's element of the storyline was weak and slightly out of character. Bryant disliked the script because of the way Peri was written for. Roberts had been disappointed by the script, and felt that the 45-minute format for the show did not work; it was his last serial for Doctor Who, since when he has worked on productions such as *Albion Morket*, *The Snow Spider* and *Widcliffe*. McCoy was generally satisfied with the finished result, although he was unhappy with some of the padding material that had been added, and Crowley's performance as Vena

● *Timelash* was shown in Australia in January 1986 and in New Zealand in October

1989. The serial aired in Germany on VOX in 1995 as *Dos Amulett* (*The Amulet*). It was released on video by BBC Worldwide in January 1998 with a photo montage cover by Blacksheep

● In the Credits, it should be noted that some of Part Two was undertaken – uncredited – by the crew of *Revelation of the Daleks*



Peri is tied to a post and threatened by a sock puppet monster. Plus ça change, dear... © BBC

RADIO TIMES

Sat 9 Mar 85 Part One: On Karfel the Board [sic] rules but all is far from OK.

Sat 16 Mar 85 Part Two: Although fighting for his life, the Doctor becomes puzzled by the lack of mirrors on Karfel.

LEFT: Hanging around inside the *Timelash*: most people depart with a screeeeaaam, we're told. © BBC

BELOW: Vena and Herbert look on as the Doctor works on his Amulet of Plot Expediency. © BBC



Revelation of the Daleks

A View to a Kill **BY JUSTIN RICHARDS**

DWM ARCHIVE

DWM 188

COMMISSIONING

Tue 27 Mar 84 The End of the Road scene breakdown commissioned
Fri 13 Jul 84 The End of the Road scripts commissioned for Mon 3 Sep 84; accepted Sat 10 Nov 84

PRODUCTION

Mon 7 Jan 85 Bollinge Hill Farm, Buriton, Hants (Rough Ground); Butser Hill Farm, Horndean, Hants (Rough Ground)
Tue 8 Jan 85 Queen Elizabeth Country Park, Horndean, Hants (Rough Ground); Bollinge Hill Farm (Rough Ground)
Wed 9 Jan 85 IBM North Harbour Building, Cosham, Portsmouth, Hants (Garden of Fond Memories)
Thu 10 Jan 85 Goodwood Estate, Halmaker, W Sussex (Long White Wall); Tangmere Aerodrome, Tangmere, W Sussex (Rough Ground)
Thu 17 Jan 85 Television Centre Studio 1: Reception Area; DJ's Studio; New Catacombs Computer Screen; Reception Hall; Ante-room
Fri 18 Jan 85 Television Centre Studio 1: New Catacomb; Reception Area; Int/Ext Cell; Computer Screen Area
Wed 30 Jan 85 Television Centre Studio 8: Old Catacombs; Incubator Room; Davros' Laboratory
Thu 31 Jan 85 Television Centre Studio 8: Old Catacombs; Davros' Laboratory; Kara's Office
Fri 1 Feb 85 Television Centre Studio 8: Old Catacombs; Davros' Laboratory; Ext/Int Cell (remount); New Catacombs

RADIO TIMES

Sat 23 Mar 85 Part One: Life and death become confused for the Doctor on Necros.
Sat 30 Mar 85 Part Two: Will Necros be the last resting place for the Doctor and Peri?

REPORTS

Part One* 19 March 1993
7.15pm-7.40pm 1.7M 28 -
Part Two* 26 March 1993
7.15pm-7.40pm 1.8M - -
Part Three* 2 April 1993
7.15pm-7.40pm 1.6M 30 -
Part Four* 9 April 1993
7.15pm-7.40pm 1.3M - -
* Broadcast on BBC2. Chart positions are for BBC2 only.



David Whitaker's dream came true: the impressive transparent 'incubation' Dalek. © BBC

that linger are not the minutiae of production detail, but the more 'human' moments. So it isn't that the Daleks who kill Vogel had to be repositioned and relit to hide the actors inside that makes me smile and nod and wish I could take you back there. It's Eleanor Bron watching Vogel's rehearsed death then pretending to throw her champagne at the Daleks in protest. On the take, she forgets a line: 'And I shall become - Oh, Christ!' Hugh Walters, completely in unctuous character looks surprised: 'Oh, I don't quite see you as that, Madam ...'

I can still see Graeme Harper bounding round the studio like the Terrible Zodin. Suddenly he's whirling round being a Dalek, his cupped hand held up to show where the eye should be. When William Gaunt suggests, half-joking, that they should include a shot of his severed leg bouncing across the floor, Harper's all 'Great, let's do it!'

In Harper's vocabulary, all cameramen are 'Sir', Colin Baker is 'Doc', the guards are 'the boys', and everyone else is 'Guv'. Well, except for William Gaunt ('Bill') and senior cameraman Alec Wheel ('Alec'). Before long, Harper's tugging a Dalek's eye into position so it edges into shot beside Tasembeker - but the end comes off in his hand. Immediately the Dalek spins away and - as if pre-planned and choreographed - Roy Skelton's grating voice is screeching 'Malfunction!' Davros goes into a fit of modulated giggles, barely recovering in time to send the Dalek to 'destroy that prattling DJ!' It trundles impressively away. 'Goodie, goodie!' it grates, happily.

When anyone speaks to Terry Molloy, their voices get picked up and modulated too. 'What happened to his other hand?' Colin Baker wants to know. Davros isn't sure: 'I assume he lost it when he became grotesque ... He's genetically re-engineered himself on to a higher level.' It's strange to hear him speaking so matter-of-factly about such things. He explains his third eye is actually his 'vision system' - to Colin's theatrical horror: 'I thought that was a beam that destroyed people. I've been playing at these.' He looks round for the director. 'We'll have to play the whole scene again. It'll look silly if I'm looking at his sockets.'

Time's getting short. 'Now let's all shut up and listen to Graeme,' the Floor Manager insists. Harper speeds up as the time shrinks. 'Fine, don't worry about a thing. It's all going to be marvellous,' he insists. And soon he has his shot: 'Yeah, Spielberg - love it!'

'Like I said, you had to be there. I mean, this was before the 'cancellation.' This was before The Trial of a Time Lord. This was back when I believed that Doctor Who was generally great with the odd exceptional duff story, rather than the other way around. This was the Daleks. And - sadly - for one of the last times, this was real Doctor Who.'

The apprentice Time Lord had a couple of days off work. He knew people at the BBC back then - people who could get him into the hallowed portals of Television Centre and leave him sitting uncomfortably on the floor of TC8's viewing gallery in the winter of 1985 with just a notebook and pen for company. Which is how he got to see the last two days' recording of *Revelation of the Daleks* ...

It's impossible to get across the excitement and enthusiasm of actually watching the programme being made. You had to be there. But looking back through my notes, I find myself transported back in time ... I can remember how hard the floor was. I can recall how limited a view you actually got from the studio gallery but that watching the monitor somehow felt like cheating. I get a rush of nostalgic excitement. No, really. I mean, this was back when the BBC were actually still making Doctor Who - and enjoying it. Nothing comes across more in my notes and memories than the enthusiasm of everyone involved.

Of course there's a tremendous thrill in being able to tell Andrew Pixley stuff he didn't already know. But the memories

ARCHIVE EXTRA

② After Resurrection of the Daleks, Terry Nation had stipulated a number of requirements about a future Dalek serial. Nathan-Turner indicated that for the next serial they were considering another enemy alongside the Daleks - possibly initially allied to them; Nation insisted that the other enemy must be a BBC-owned character and that the Daleks should be seen to be victorious over the other enemy before their defeat by the Doctor

① Monday 6 February 1984: Graeme Harper was engaged as director on Serial 6Z

② Eric Seward wrote the serial during his period of leave from the series from late July to early September 1984, with research during his holiday in Rhodes. Apart from Mr Jobel (based on Mr Joyboy, the senior mortician at Whispering Glades Memorial Park), other characters inspired in part by Evelyn Waugh's

1948 novel *The Loved One* included Vogel from Mrs Bogolov and Bostock from Mrs Kosstock. The main character, Aimie Thanatogenos, partly inspired the name Arthur Stengos, although the name Stengos also derived from a ferry boat owner Seward encountered in Rhodes; Kara took her name from "cara", a local brand of potatoes. The Greek fertility saint who inspired Tasembeker's name was Tasambeker and the character of the DJ was

inspired by a bored disc jockey whom Seward heard on his car radio when driving home late one night from a meal

● In the Part One rehearsal script for *Revelation of the Daleks*, Tranquil Repose's Reception Area is described as "high tec. The walls are smooth and white. Any embellishment should be in chrome ... The lighting is restful verging on the respectful." Takis is "a bear of a man" and all the attendants wear "very simple white two piece unisex tunics". Mr Jobel is "fat, greasy-haired and bespectled (sic) in 'John Lennon' round framed glasses" and has "two small gold flashes on the collar of his tunic top". Seward described the mutant as "humanoid in shape ... His face is grotesquely distorted as though his skin has been melted. Large globs of flesh seem to have bubbled ... then set, before the features have had time to completely dissolve ... Saliva gushes from the Mutant's mouth and soon the Doctor's face is drenched". The DJ is dressed in the standard white attendants uniform but "has attempted to modify his with a dash of his own personality. He also wears a colourful headband and dark glasses. DJ has two voices. The first is a mid-Atlantic, lipped up version which is his 'professional' DJ's voice. The second, is his natural voice, which is a flat English accent"; the DJ's speech originally indicates that George is "one hundred and sixty-three Tralphon years old" and the music he plays is "strange electronic music" rather than period Earth tunes. Davros' head is "suspended in a large tank of clear liquid" while Kara is "tall sexy, forthright (sic) ... striking in appearance rather than beautiful". When Natasha finds her father's head in a metal box, there was originally dialogue where Stengos mistakes Grigory (also referred to as "Gregory") for his daughter's husband; when the pair are captured, Lilit flings a knife into the floor an inch from Gregory's head and there was an extra scene of the couple being interrogated in the cell. Orcini is "tall, slim and fit ... in his mid-forties with a shock of white hair. He is dressed in a simple, black tunic ... neat, almost dapper." Bostock is "dirty and untidy (and) has the unpleasant habit of sniffing then cuffing his nose when he becomes excited ... Downwind of Bostock is not a very pleasant place to be". The Doctor originally tells Peri that he is "seven hundred years old" rather than nine hundred. Before he dismisses the attendants for the presidential ceremony, Jobel adds "Now get the witch loaded onto a transporter. And be careful. Her face has been emmelled. If that lot cracks she'll look as though I've crazy paved her physog." In the Garden of Fond Memories, the Doctor finds a massive statue of himself attached to a wall; he observes that the weathering indicates it has been here some time

● A set of scripts for *Revelation of the Daleks* were accepted by Nathan-Turner on Saturday 10 November 1984. Reading these, Harper saw the story as a pastiche of not only *The Loved One*, but also Soylent Green, a 1973 film in which a New York police detective of the year 2022 discovers that the main food supply for the world, soylent green, is made from dead bodies. This in turn was vaguely based on Harry Harrison's 1966 novel about overpopulation, *Make Room! Make Room!* Preparing for the serial, Harper viewed *Genesis of the Daleks* and *Resurrection of the Daleks* to study the character of Davros. Revised scripts for the serial were sent to Nation's agent on Saturday

● Part Two's script had Jobel asking Peri if the Doctor is her father in the opening scene, and had more dialogue from the Doctor and Peri about Jobel being horrid; President Vargas' wife is named as Sontana of whom the Doctor comments "I knew her well. (ENIGMATICALLY) Very well at one time." The promotional film of the DJ originally had more dialogue, with him assuring clients that only he and the Resting One would hear the confidential messages. When captured by the Daleks, the Doctor immediately realises that Davros is the Great Healer and tells the Daleks he finds their voices irritating. There was more

dialogue between Jobel and Peri when they went to see the DJ as Jobel warns "You want to watch him. There's only one thing faster than his tongue, and that's his hands." Jobel then indicates he must return to his attendants "before they rupture themselves shifting a client! Lead lined caskets can play havoc with the groin, you know." A scene in Kara's office has her and Vogel tracking the approaching Dalek spaceship, with dialogue emphasising that Kara also wants to kill President Vargas and destroy his federation of the ten planets so that she can control the food supply of the galaxy. Discussing the Daleks with Takis and Lilit, Jobel says that they are always "sticking their plunger in where they're not wanted"; Takis and Lilit also discuss Jobel's lack of hygiene being why women found him attractive, with Takis telling his colleague "Your armpits are already like maggot farms." Originally, Tasambeker kills Jobel with a scalpel, and there was a brief scene of Davros ordering her destroyed. When Natasha and Grigory return to the incubator room, one of the two Dalek membranes has hatched and the hovering Dalek kills them. The DJ also originally made a longer, more impassioned broadcast to Tranquil Repose about being under attack from the Daleks - "It ain't much fun ... And unless you wanna have as little fun as me you'd better do something before it's too late. From my heart to your heart ..." The closing scene was far shorter, and ended with the Doctor saying that they should leave Tranquil Repose in peace

● During casting, Anna Carteret and Ronald Lacey were initially offered the roles of Kara and Jobel. On Tuesday 20 November, Robbie Coltrane was offered the role of Takis, Ray Brooks was approached regarding Orcini on Wednesday 21 November, and the following day Nerys Hughes (who had worked with Harper on District Nurse) was offered Kara, with Denholm Elliott approached regarding Jobel on Wednesday 28. The part of the DJ was offered to Roger Daltry on Monday 26 and Jasper Carrott on Wednesday 28; other performers considered included Kenny Everett, Rik Mayall, Ringo Starr, David Bowie,



17 November with assurances that the Daleks now featured more prominently in Part One.

Full throttle: Colin Baker and Terry Molloy cement their characters' animosity between scenes! © BBC

The deadly assassins: Orcini (William Gaunt) and Bostock (John Ogwen) in conference with Kara (Eleanor Bron) and Vogel (Hugh Walters). © BBC





"Sticking their plungers in where they're not wanted!" Takis (Trevor Cooper) faces the Supreme Dalek's troops. © BBC

Sting, Rowan Atkinson, Adam Faith, Tim Curry, Bob Geldof, Paul McCartney, Robert Lindsey, Gary Glitter, David Essex, Nicky Henson, Paul Nicholas, Richard O'Sullivan, Dennis Waterman, Christopher Timothy, Jim Dale, Lenny Henry, Bryan Ferry, Phil Collins, Kenneth Cranham, Robert Powell, Freddie Starr, Jim Davidson, Rod Stewart, Garry Hutton, Billy Connolly and Shakin' Stevens. Via Gawn Grainer, Nathan-Turner had offered the role of the mutant to Sir Laurence Olivier for a bit of fun. Harper commented the character of Orcini to that of Cervantes' hero Don Quixote and offered the role to William Gaunt whom he had worked with before on the BBC drama *Cloire*. The director cast John Ogwen as Bostock (whom he compared to Quixote's companion Sancho Panza), having worked with him on *District Nurse*. Harper also saw

"For the last time, I am not Laurence Olivier!" © BBC



Takis and Lilt as being sinister versions of the classic comic double act Stan Laurel and Oliver Hardy. Harper had been at drama school with Colin Spaul who was desperate for work; the director was able to cast him as Lilt after considering him as the mutant. Trevor Cooper, playing Takis, was recommended to Harper by production assistant Michael Cameron. Considering a comic who had done some straight acting for the DJ, Nathan-Turner and Harper recalled Alexei Sayle's appearance in the film *Gorky Park*; Sayle had also written an article entitled *Why I should be the New Doctor Who: The Case for a Marxist in the TARDIS* which had appeared in the November 1984 edition of *Foundation*. Nathan-Turner suggested Jenny Tomasin for Tasambeker, recalling her role as Ruby in the LWT period drama *Upstairs, Downstairs* in the 1970s. The role of Grigory was the first television for Stephen Flynn whom Harper knew through some friends and had seen on stage. The director had cast Bridget Lynch-Blosse, playing Natasha, in an episode of *Juliet Bravo* he had directed in 1984 which had also featured Alec Linstead who played Stengos

● The production team visited the IBM offices at Cosham on Monday 26 November and arranged shooting there with press officer Lorna Mountford. The camera recon for the serial took place on Monday 17 and Tuesday 18 December

● Film rehearsals began on Thursday 3 January 1985 in Room 502 at Acton; studio rehearsals started on Friday 11 January and Saturday 19 January. It was during rehearsals that Molloy suggested that Davros' chair should be able to levitate in his confrontation with Orcini. Sayle gave a very muted performance in rehearsals, explaining to Harper that he was saving himself for recording. Clive Swift was bothered that he was going over the top in his role as Jobel. Ken Barker had a make-up test session as the mutant on the afternoon of Friday 4 January

● Monday 7 January 1985: The film schedule for the serial had a seasonal cover taken from a Christmas card showing Santa Claus emerging from the TARDIS onto a sunny

beach and the caption "Wrong Again Doctor!". The crew were based at the Langrish Hotel in Petersfield and awoke to find that there had been an overnight snowfall in the area where they were due to shoot. Unfortunately, the flashing light for the TARDIS roof had been left behind and a substitute had to be hurriedly cobbled together by the scenery crew. The venue of Bolling Hill Farm was selected after Cameron had scoured the South Downs for a remote looking area with a pond. Visual effects designers Jim Francis and Dave Barton braved the freezing water to place the "woofers" device for the underwater eruption at the start of Part One. Butser Hill was then used for Peri finding Herba Baculum Vitae

● Tuesday 8 January 1985: For the attack on the mutant, Nicola Bryant was given a rubber stick (a stone in the script) by visual effects to hit stuntman Ken Baker with. It had been planned to shoot the sequence with Bostock and Orcini destroying two flying Daleks which attacked them at Butser Hill in the afternoon. Visual effects designer John Brace and his team had made a spring-loaded platform to propel lightweight prop Daleks, packed with explosives, into the air. However, it was clear that the vehicles required to move the heavy platform into position at Butser Hill was no longer practical in the snow. Also abandoned was a shot of a Dalek watching the Doctor and Peri heading for Tranquil Repose. It was decided to rework the Orcini/Dalek confrontation for a new venue – Tangmere Aerodrome – found by Cameron. As originally written, it opened with Orcini and Bostock finding the dead mutant

● Wednesday 9 January 1985: IBM agreed with the BBC that there would be strict security at their facility; no photographs were to be taken without permission and nobody was to enter the main North Harbour building unless authorised. The fee for using IBM's premises was donated to the Cliffdale School in Cosham; Colin Baker visited the school to present the cheque to its headmaster. The collapsing statue of the Doctor was constructed in four pieces by design assistant Derek Howarth from jabolite; Harper shot two versions of the cliff-hanger but the one with lots of blood seeping out from under the statue was vetoed by Nathan-Turner. To finance the new Daleks for the serial, Brace arranged that the costs would be shared with BBC Enterprises who could co-own them afterwards and use them for promotional work. This was agreed with Julie Jones of Enterprises and production associate June Collins, but then Brace's superiors frowned upon the deal. The Dalek which watched the Doctor and Peri entering Tranquil Repose – really the IBM car park – was pulled along on a wire

● Thursday 10 January 1985: During the scene where the Doctor and Peri climbed over the wall, Baker and Bryant had difficulty in keeping a straight face when delivering the dialogue of double-entendres. For the destruction of the Dalek at Tangmere Aerodrome, Jim Francis rigged up the Dalek to explode but it produced such thick fumes that the crew started choking. The airfield was dressed with the same statues used at IBM

● Saturday 12 January 1985: A small amount of voice recording was done for the serial on this day

● The model shoot on the serial was done in one day at the Visual Effects Department on Western Avenue in Acton. The explosions were shot using a high speed 16mm camera and slowed down to look larger. The model spaceship was made by Bill Pearson to John Brace's design

● Studio recordings took place from 2.30pm to 6.00pm and 7.30pm to 10.00pm each day, apart from Wednesday 30 January when the evening session began at 7.00pm

● Thursday 17 January 1985: For the battle with the Daleks, Bryant found herself in a fit of giggles alongside Sayle. The DJ's headphones were made by visual effects assistant Andy Lazzell

● For the set design of Tranquil Repose, designer Alan Spalding went for an Egyptian death motif; the undercity corridors were based on Spalding's research at Highgate Cemetery and various statues came from the BBC period drama *By the Sword Divided*. The lined make-up for the staff was based on images that costume designer Pat Godfrey had seen in *Vogue* and were worked into Dorka Nieradzik's make-up

● Friday 18 January 1985: Parts of the set elements for Tranquil Repose had been built for the film *Little and Large* show

● Wednesday 23 January 1985: The BBC staff magazine *Ariel* included an article entitled *Home-made Daleks* about the six new Daleks made for the serial at Wales Farm Road

● Wednesday 30 January 1985: The glass Dalek was made in three sections by the external firm Dennys based at Shepherds Bush. It was the idea of Nieradzik to make Linstead up as if Stengos' liver and kidneys were growing out of the side of his head; Linstead also had a dental plate to wear

● Thursday 31 January 1985: Kara's office was the DJ's studio redressed from the first recording block. Nieradzik had to make a new mask for Terry Molloy to wear as Davros, and Brace's team also had to rebuild Davros' chair from reference photographs. For the rotating tank housing Davros' head, Brace's assistant Colin Gory came up with the idea of having Molloy seated on a swivel chair

● Friday 1 February 1985: There was an over-run of 15 minutes in studio to complete recording on the season. When Davros' hand was shot off, Molloy complained that Davros' blood should have been blue rather than green

● After the main studio recordings were completed, a post-production recording took place for the flying Dalek which kills Natasha and Grigory; this was a Dalek model from the Sevans range and allowed Harper to get a depth of field he could not achieve in studio with a full size prop

● After a gallery-only session in TCs on Monday 4 February, the serial was edited. Nathan-Turner contacted the *Radio Times* to suggest a cover for the serial or at least an article on Friday 8 February. Baker did some sound recording for the serial on Monday 18 February. The first episode was dubbed on Thursday 7 and Friday 8 March with the second on Monday 18 and Tuesday 19 March

● At a playback, Jonathan Powell was critical of Jenny Tomasin's performance as Tasambeker and her scenes were reduced further. A scene in the Reception Area in Part One where she confronted Takis and Lilt was cut to a minimum; originally this opened with Tasambeker calling Takis, who ignores her and continues to arrange flowers while Lilt murmurs "Who's in love. Who's in love." Tasambeker reprimands Takis for turning off his communicator when the Great Healer is trying to contact him, but Takis retorts that he likes flowers. Lilt observes that Tasambeker has to vent her frustration. A scene in Davros' Laboratory where Tasambeker was recruited to Davros' cause was also dropped. Much of Part One was resequenced during editing, particularly with regards the film sequences of the Doctor and Peri. In Part Two, the scene where the Doctor and Peri met Tasambeker was also reduced and cut in two, omitting more dialogue from Tasambeker in which she sells the concept of Tranquil Repose to the Doctor, should he wish to become a "Resting One". The subsequent scene between the trio was also recut to remove Tasambeker discussing how Tranquil Repose was zoned by religious faith, and the Doctor's admission that he really wants to see the records rather than become a "Resting One"; this angers Tasambeker as she has wasted her time with her sales pitch. Some of Tasambeker discussing Jobel with Davros was also trimmed, as was the start of the scene where Jobel discussed the situation with Takis and Lilt. A scene with the DJ telling Peri how he has had her and the Doctor under observation the whole time was cut, as was the end of another scene where the DJ indicates he had expected trouble for some time. Another missing scene had the Daleks escorting a protesting Kara along the catacombs to Davros; the woman explains that she is a VIP – a "very insecure person"

● In post-production, Quantel was used to shake the picture in the closing scenes as well

as placing all the images on the scanner screens; Paintbox provided the ray of rock'n'roll fired by the DJ. The establishing shot of Kara's factory in Part One was a piece of stock footage showing an oil refinery, electronically treated to give it a purple hue

● For the incidental score, Harper asked Roger Limb to provide something which sounded symphonic; the majority of the score was performed on the Radiophonic Workshop's new DX-7 Synthesiser

● In 1993, the serial was selected to represent the Colin Baker era of Doctor Who in a BBCa repeat season. The four-part version of the serial as syndicated overseas was used for transmission on Friday evenings in March/April 1993; it received very low ratings. *Revelation of the Daleks* was shown in Australia in December 1985; New Zealand screened it as part of the silver anniversary programming in November 1988 and repeated it in December 1989. UK Gold screened the serial in its four-part version in November 1994 and as a compilation from January 1995; it serial aired in Germany on VOX in 1995 as *Der Planet der Toten* (The Planet of the Dead)

● The serial was released by BBC Worldwide on video as part of a limited edition Dalek box set in November 1999; this included a slightly extended version of Peri crying when the DJ is killed by the Daleks and had the Jimi Hendrix recording of *Fire* removed because it could not be cleared for issue (a generic piece of rock music was substituted in its place). The same version appeared as part of *The Davros Collection* for WH Smith in September 2001. Colin Howard provided artwork for the serial on a *Slowdazzle* postcard in 1999. In addition to the finished episodes, the BBC retain earlier edits of both shows

● In the Extras section, Steve Emerson was a Stuntman/Guard and Kevin O'Brien was a Guard.



Ginger nut: the monstrous embalmer Mr Jobel (Clive Swift) makes his inspection of Tranquil Repose. © BBC

Alexei Sayle as the DJ entertains the 'resting ones' with some "good old fifties Earthtime rock and roll!" © BBC





It's Alright (Baby's Coming Back)

Red Devils, green issues and Yellow Fever – the Sixth Doctor's era was bold, colourful and rarely out of the public eye, but off-screen clashes saw the future of the series looking anything but bright. Andrew Pixley charts a bumpy course through the worst two years of Doctor Who's life ...

In retrospect, the first warning that Doctor Who had some tough times ahead of it was probably a less than favourable review of *Vengeance* on *Voros* which appeared in the *Daily Telegraph* on Saturday 26 January 1985 ... the same time as the *Daily Star* reprimanded Nicola Bryant for her revealing on-screen attire. "Unaccustomed crudity, sex and sadism" was how the *Telegraph* summed up Doctor Who's latest offering which, in its 5.20pm slot, was serving up spectacles such as scorched mortuary attendants flailing in acid baths and mercenaries graphically having their hands crushed. The controversy of violence was one which the series had been accused of many times in its last 20 years, and although producer John Nathan-Turner had been concerned about the late afternoon slot allocated his early evening programme, the scripts and shows had been vetted and cleared by his superior, Jonathan Powell. Yet BBC's Points of View took up the controversy of violence in its edition of Friday 1 February – the day that Nathan-Turner flew to OmniCon VI for a weekend in Florida. On his return, he was greeted with more critical letters from concerned parents of younger viewers in the Thursday 7 February edition of the *Radio Times*.

Ignoring these points of viewer concern, Doctor Who continued to promote itself wherever possible, including a piece in the *Daily Express* on Saturday 2 February about Nicola Bryant and her "boyfriend" Scott Bayliss (really her husband of two years, although Nathan-Turner had asked the actress to pretend that she was an unmarried American to the press), an item on forthcoming *Times* guest star Tracy Louise Ward in the *Sunday Express* the next day, and BBC press officer Kevin O'Shea saying that Sir Laurence Olivier would not be making a guest appearance on the series in the Monday 4 February edition of *Girl About Town*. Script editor Eric Saward continued to arrange the scripts for the new season. Michael Feeny Callan – a biographer, novelist and television scripter on shows like *The Professionals* – was commissioned to write *The Children* of January on Tuesday 5 February, while Robert Holmes was given the go-ahead for all three episodes of the Singapore-based *Yellow Fever* the following day. Nathan-Turner was still keen to move on from Doctor Who if the opportunity presented itself, and was interested in another series format, *The Managers*, which director Matthew Robinson discussed with him. But for Nathan-Turner and Colin Baker, it was soon time for more trips to America – first for a Creation convention in Champagne, Illinois on Saturday 9 and Sunday 10 February, and the following weekend to a Doctor Who Fan Club of America event at Valley Forge in Pennsylvania. On the flights, Baker got a chance to read the rehearsal scripts for *The Nightmare Fair* – an edited version of which had been prepared by Saward on Thursday 7 February. Baker very much enjoyed the story, and looked forward to starting the location filming in Blackpool, due to begin on Monday 1 April.

As *The Mark of the Rani* concluded and *The Two Doctors* began on BBC1, it became clear that the large audience who tuned in to see the reformatting show in January had slowly departed – largely for ITV where the successful

American action series *The A-Team* was being screened. Doctor Who's ratings now hovered around seven million, much the same as the previous season, while almost twice as many people were tuning in for mayhem with Hannibal, BA, Face and Murdoch on the commercial channel. Furthermore, the show's audience appreciation was slightly down, and for four weeks running it fell outside the top rated 100 shows of the week. But Doctor Who was still good material for the tabloids; on Sunday 10 February, the *Sunday Mirror* revealed how Bryant had turned down £20,000 to pose nude, while on Saturday 16 February, *The Sun* ran "20 Things You Didn't Know about Dr Who", focusing on Colin Baker and revealing the actor's fear of spiders and his admiration of Paul McCartney's *Fool on the Hill*. But even *The Sun* didn't

DOCTOR WHO'S RATINGS WERE NOW AROUND SEVEN MILLION – TWICE AS MANY WERE WATCHING 'THE A TEAM'



April 1986: Colin attends the WhoTex convention with Jon Pertwee – the very time when *The Nightmare Fair* should have been in production ...

know what would be happening to Baker in the coming weeks ...

The tide of merchandise continued with a second album of incidental music from the series, the computer game *Warlord* from the BBC, a new range of jigsaws from Waddingtons, a home video of *Pyramids of Mars*, the first of a series of videotaped interviews in the *Myth Maker* series from Keith Barnfather and the announcement of Fan Aid, a series of fund-raising activities for charity organised by Paul Cornell and inspired by the Band Aid appeal of 1984. A collection of Doctor Who comic strips from TV Comic, TV Action and

Countdown was also suggested to the BBC in February 1985, but not developed. Meanwhile, Nathan-Turner and Saward attended a playback of *The Two Doctors* with Jonathan Powell. Powell, who had deemed the scripts "excellent" in June 1984, now said that he wasn't happy with the finished product.

In addition to lining up the new scripts, Saward found time to write an eight-minute Doctor Who sketch for Baker to act out with an eight-year-old fan Gareth Jenkins on BBC's *Jim'll Fix It*; since this would be broadcast directly after Part Two of *The Two Doctors*, it was entitled *In A Fix With Sontarans* and would see the Doctor coming up against Group Marshall Stern (later changed to Group Marshall Nathan as an in-joke). With Bryant on holiday in Venice, Janet Fielding returned for a cameo as Tegan, and the item was taped in TC8 on Wednesday 20 February with insert recording of the Sontarans dying from 11.00am to 12.15pm, and then the main recording of the show from 6.15pm to 7.30pm. The same day, Matthew Robinson indicated that he might have to pull out of directing both *The Nightmare Fair* and a later story in the season because of fee negotiations.

On Thursday 21 February, Ian Levine contacted Nathan-Turner to say that he had heard a rumour that Doctor Who was going to be cancelled. Having heard nothing from within the Corporation, the producer declared that this was ridiculous – but shortly afterwards, Saward was told the same story by Holmes as they discussed *Yellow Fever*. Uneasy, Nathan-Turner left contact numbers as he departed for Philadelphia to attend a DWFAA event.



Above: Going for a song. Sally Thomsett, Faith Brown, Colin Baker, Nicola Bryant and Bobby Lee send out an SOS with the *Doctor in Distress* single. Below: Colin hits the road with the travelling exhibition. Also: BBC

The fact of the matter was that there was a "mole" in the office of Michael Grade who was leaking news of what was in store for the show. In early 1985, the BBC was short of funding which it needed for several important projects. The corporation was launching *EastEnders*, which had been in development for some years and was a costly gamble to create the BBC's first successful soap opera in years. The race to launch a breakfast television service in 1982 was still having a knock-on effect, and the Corporation also needed to launch a daytime service on its channels, something which ITV had operated for some years. Grade ruthlessly weeded out programmes that were too expensive or not performing to the required levels. The children's variety show *Crockerjack* was not renewed for the first time in 30 years. The *Hot Shot Show* with Wayne Sleep and Bonnie Langford was discontinued, as were Mike Reid's *Pop Quiz* and *Ask the Family*. *Doctor Who* – disliked by its head of department, the target of viewer complaints about violence, and playing to dwindling audiences – was also now in Grade's sights. And as Grade admitted, he was no fan of science fiction, and felt that the BBC's limited budget was no competition for the space blockbusters of the cinema.

While Nathan-Turner was away in America, *In A Fix With Sontarons* aired as part of *Jim'll Fix It* in the 6.05pm slot which the producer had wanted for *Doctor Who*. 1.01 million viewers tuned in – over four million more than had just seen the actual *Doctor Who* episode.

Arriving back in London on Monday 25 February, Nathan-Turner was summoned to see Powell and informed that the season that was due to start shooting in five weeks was suspended; *Doctor Who* would be deferred while its funds were diverted towards other projects. While O'Shea prepared a press statement, a shocked Nathan-Turner returned to the production office to inform the rest of the team, and then went with Gary Downie over to Levine's so that they could assess what to do. Nathan-Turner had Levine telephone Charles Catchpole at *The Sun* and give the codename "Snowball"; Catchpole was then told by a "source" working for Grade that there was a plot to get rid of *Doctor Who*, and Nathan-Turner furnished figures indicating the

show's profitability and suggested the notion that the action was tied in with an increase in the television licence fee. The exercise was then repeated with Geoff Baker at the *Daily Star*. Nathan-Turner and Levine emphasised that the show was postponed – not cancelled.

On Tuesday 26 February, the news was leaked to Thames Television, who in turn contacted the London evening paper *The Standard*. Thus it was Patrick Hill of *The Standard* who broke the news to the public on Wednesday 27 as "Dr Who is Dropped". Hill quoted both Levine and a spokesman for the DWAS, while explaining that *Doctor Who* was felt to be "too expensive to produce" and thus "suspended for at least 18 months". A BBC spokesman said that the Corporation wanted to produce new drama and "cannot afford to do that and produce Dr Who", reassuringly adding that "The Doctor is being rested, but will be back next year". Grade – who was on a skiing holiday in France – was firmly named as the man behind the decision.

Nathan-Turner attempted to contact Baker and Bryant as soon as possible, but Bryant did not hear of the suspension until her return from Venice. When a newspaper reporter phoned her up to ask how she felt about "the death of *Doctor Who*", she hung up, believing that Baker had been killed; fortunately her agent phoned minutes later to explain events. On BBC1, *Newsround* and the Six O'Clock News covered the story with clips from *The Two Doctors*. David Saunders, the co-ordinator of the DWAS, collaborated with Levine to organise fan action; it had been hoped that Saunders would talk to Grade on *Breakfast Time* next morning while David Howe would appear on *Good Morning Britain*, but both items were dropped. Calls flooded into the *Doctor Who* production office, where a concerned

Patrick Troughton turned up to offer support and help answer the phone.

Thursday 28 February began with the story being carried in most newspapers, as well as being discussed by Gwen Watford on *Breakfast Time*. Catchpole's major piece – "Dr Who is Axed in BBC Plot" – appeared in *The Sun*, and *The Standard* now ran a front page story of how the DWASA were offering funds to sponsor the new season. Nathan-Turner suggested a publicity stunt of Levine smashing a television set in fury, and the DJ/record producer was interviewed by Leonard Parkin on ITV's *News at One*. Press coverage continued on Friday 1 March with *The Sun* and *The Daily Star* announcing "Save Dr



Who" campaigns, and the Daily Mail suggesting that Doctor Who was to be replaced by Chris Boucher's proposed series *Star Cops*. Mike Smith had wanted to cover the story in *Friday People* but had to drop the item, while Levine's tentative appearance on Wogan was replaced by a Cyberman praising Grade. On ITV, Michael Aspel was able to cover the story on LWT's Six O'Clock Show. Paul Mark Tammis announced a celebrity record, suggesting that the proceeds could help pay for the new season. In the afternoon, Bill Cotton, the Managing Director of BBC Television, telephoned Saunders to discuss a BBC statement that was being assembled and assured him that Doctor Who would be back in Autumn 1986 and in its 25-minute format. The BBC Television Press Office then issued the bulletin on Cotton's behalf, in which he was quoted as saying it was time for the series to "get back to basics", and how it would return for a carefully-worded "greater number of weeks", concluding "I am confident Doctor Who has a great future on BBC1".

Most papers quoted the press release on Saturday 2, and the focus began to swing around to Grade who was tracked down in the Alps by Corinna Honan of the Daily Express. Allowed to have his say for the first time in "Grade: Why the Doctor had to go", BBC1's controller explained how the viewing figures had slumped from 11 million to six million in recent years, how a theory over the licence fee quoted by Troughton was nonsense, and promised that the show would be back and "better than ever". The fact of the matter was that Grade wanted to see the series return, but ideally with a new production team. The executive was used to press attention of this nature; in January 1985, he had made some unpopular decisions about suspending the broadcast of the top rated American soap *Dallas* as part of a bidding war with Thames. By now, the fan feeling was firmly against Grade, and he was soon to be sent a model of a horse's arse by American fan Gail Bennett.

After a meeting on Sunday 3, the DWAS and the successful DWB fanzine formulated a plan of action, issuing a letter to the 3200 DWAS members, many of whom were appearing as "outraged fans" in local newspaper items. A letter was also written to Cotton saying that fans feared Doctor Who would only return for a single season and asking for a commitment to 16 new episodes on Saturday nights. Saunders delivered the missive to Cotton's office the next day, after being interviewed by Richard Baker for Radio 4's *Start the Week*. However, other sectors of fandom who had been unhappy with recent seasons welcomed the suspension, with Grade being praised on *Tyne Tees* *Nightline* that evening. Similarly, when *Television Today* commented on Grade's decision on Thursday 7, their verdict was "fair enough" while James Murray, discussing *The Two Doctors* the same day in the Daily Express, observed that the scene of Shockeye menacing Peri was unsuitable and that "the people who make Dr Who seem to have thrown the [rule] book away".

The cancellation surfaced on *Points of View* on Tuesday 5 March, although the main focus was complaints about the "rat eating" scene in *The Two Doctors*. Cotton replied to the DWAS saying that he could not give the assurances they wanted, but stating that "We intend to continue to produce Dr Who for as long as we believe the British public enjoy it." Tammis' novelty record, *Doctor in Distress*, was recorded over the night of Thursday 7 March at Trident Studios in Soho and featured Doctor Who actors such as Baker, Bryant, Anthony Ainley, Nicholas Courtney and Faith Brown alongside the likes of Bobby Lee, Matt Bianco, Phyllis Nelson, Justin Hayward and Sally Thomsett. Levine produced the song and a video was shot by Barnfather; it had been decided to donate all the proceeds to Cancer Relief. The single was released on Friday 15 March and received coverage in the NME and *Girl About Town* in the coming days. Unfortunately, Radio 1 decided not to broadcast it – the channel controller claiming that the lyrics were unclear – and the single received little airplay, attaining only number 130 in the charts. Letters condemning the suspension appeared on *Points of View* on Tuesday 12 March, culminating in presenter Barry Took being zapped.

The situation on scripts was now unclear; certainly the planned season of stories in the 45-minute format would need to be reworked for the following year if they were to be used. Baker and Bryant were very much looking forward to *The Nightmare Fair* and *Yellow Fever*, and Bryant was keen

on a story where she would play her own evil double; the two stars had also been in discussions with Seward about changing the somewhat bickering relationship seen between the Doctor and Peri in the previous season. Immediately after cancellation, Holmes, Bidmead and Callan were asked to continue to develop their scripts but in the revised format; the change back to 25 minutes was a blow for Nathan-Turner and Seward who believed that the initial problems with the double-length shows could have been ironed out in the new season. Other potential storylines included an untitled item from Bill Pritchard (which would possibly have appeared later in the season) as well as submissions from Gary Hopkins, Jonathan Wolfman and Barbara Clegg (whose storyline, *Point of Entry*, had the Doctor and Peri landing in Elizabethan London as Christopher Marlowe was writing *Dr Faustus* and concerned the return of the alien Omnium via an Aztec knife blade). Following the cancellation, Nathan-Turner commissioned Pip and Jane Baker for a four-part serial under the title *Gallifrey* [sic] to be delivered as soon as possible – though no work for such a story was undertaken by them. In the midst of the upset about Doctor Who, there was happiness for Colin Baker who became a proud father again when his wife gave birth to a 8lb

'WE INTEND TO CONTINUE TO PRODUCE DOCTOR WHO AS LONG AS WE BELIEVE THE BRITISH PUBLIC ENJOY IT' SAID THE BBC



Flower press: Colin Baker gets a warm reception at one of his numerous convention appearances to promote the series in the USA.

1102 baby girl on Friday 15 March.

With the BBC's apparent lack of faith in Doctor Who as a television programme, it was an odd time for them to receive an approach about making a film. Coast to Coast – the organisation of George Dugdale, Peter Litten and John Humphreys – indicated that they would be interested in doing a Doctor Who movie for the cinema in March 1985, setting the ball rolling for ten years of development work. The Radio Times ran a number of letters about the suspension on Thursday 21 March, and Grade replied to these observing that the reaction of the fans was "bordering on the hysterical". But the Corporation's reassurances that Doctor Who would return as a success was being echoed in the press, with the Daily Mail saying "Dr Who will be back for 21 years" on Thursday 21 and the Sunday Express declaring "Dr Who lives to end of time" the following weekend. With his show in limbo, Nathan-Turner attended a couple more American conventions for Creation: Rochester on Saturday 23/Sunday 24 March and New York City the following weekend.

After the "Blackpool" reference intended to close *Revelation of the Daleks* Part Two had been removed, the final episode of the season aired on Saturday 30 March. The ratings had actually improved slightly after the suspension announcement and the Daleks had – as always – proved popular with viewers. The *A Team* had also finished it run to be replaced by the new HITV fantasy adventure *Robin of Sherwood*; while this new series was not as potent as its predecessor, it was still attracting four million more viewers than Doctor Who. A BBC Audience Research Report attempted to summarise Season Twenty-Two's uneven performance and noted that " whilst the character of Doctor Who is generally considered likeable, the portrayal of Colin Baker is not so highly regarded".

Highly regarded or not, it was Baker whom British Television selected to switch on the new speaking clock and who made an appearance on ITN's *News at One* discussing it on Tuesday 2 April – the day after the location shoot on *The Nightmare Fair* would have begun. That Saturday, Baker attended DWASocial 5 at the Novotel Hammesmith alongside many other guests including Nathan-Turner. It was here that the rift between the producer and Levine became apparent after Levine warned fans that the new season of 25-minute episodes would only be 20 shows rather than the full 26 fans expected. Nathan-Turner strongly denied this, saying that no number had been fixed; he also said that he was assembling a package of repeats to bridge the gap and did not know if any of the existing scripts would be usable. He was also hoping to assemble a documentary about the Doctors entitled *Splendid Chaps, All Of Them* for BBC2's *Open Space*.

With no work lined up during a period when he was meant to be making Doctor Who, Baker made numerous personal appearances such as Calcut Sava Centre on Thursday 11 April and Texas Superstores in Preston on Saturday 20 April; he also appeared on *Good Morning Britain* on Wednesday



Left: "Are you sitting comfortably?" "No, not really!"
 Below: Portland bill: Colin and Nicola visit
 Broadcasting House to promote the Eric Seward-
 penned *Slipback* for *Pirate Radio 4*. TONY CLARK

17 to discuss his charity work connected with Cot Death. BBC1 scheduled the two Aaru movies *Dr Who* and the Daleks and Daleks – Invasion Earth 2150AD on Saturday mornings from Saturday 20, the same day that Grade discussed *Doctor Who* on The Late Clive James, observing "the show's not doing very well ... It's overtly violent, it's losing audiences" and saying that it needed time off air to be put right. The violence aspect was echoed the following weekend by NVLA founder Mary Whitehouse at one of her meetings.

From Friday 26 to Sunday 28 April, Baker was making another appearance in Texas – only this time at the Who-Tex Convention alongside Jon Pertwee in Texas USA. During April, Grade had been approached by the production team of a new Radio 4 children's strand, *Pirate Radio 4*, and asked for permission to allow a one-hour *Doctor Who* story to be recorded and broadcast, possibly in six ten-minute daily segments in July. Grade was happy to agree, and Seward was soon appointed as the writer with the working title *The Domesday Project*. Nathan-Turner went to visit Grade at Television Centre and found that Powell was there as well. They discussed the way forward for *Doctor Who* and Grade was of the opinion that a change of Doctor might help the public's perception of the series, but Nathan-Turner argued that Baker



Friday 21 June saw another film proposal entitled *The Crossroads in Time* submitted by Michael Bond, while the following Monday, Black Guardian actor Valentine Dyal passed away at the age of 77 – only a fortnight after recording his guest appearance in *Slipback*. The following Saturday, the first of the FanAid events was staged in Bath, and the attendance of a number of guests including Baker saw £190 being raised.

Preparations were now well underway for the trial season of *Doctor Who*, and on Friday 5 July, Nathan-Turner and Seward generated the character outlines for the courtroom judge and prosecutor, referred to as the Inquisitor and the Valeyard. It had also been decided that the character of

weeks". Nathan-Turner was bitterly unhappy at this; only five years earlier he had been proud to announce a 28 week season, the longest since 1969. The news also came as a blow to Seward. By now, Seward and Nathan-Turner had hatched an idea for the new episodes based on a notion of Seward's; the overall theme would be that the Doctor was now standing trial for his life, reflecting the fact that the series itself was "on trial". As such, the currently available scripts were abandoned since they would not fit the new format; this included a version of *Yellow Fever* – now without the Master – which had been kept in development by an unwell Holmes.

Fairly rapidly, the 14-episode decision was leaked to the popular press, with The Sun revealing Grade and Powell's demands for fewer shows with less violence on Saturday 8 June; the BBC denied the article the following month. Monday 10 saw the *Pirate Radio 4* serial – now under the title *Slipback* – being recorded by Baker and

Bryant in Studio B11 of Broadcasting House. The stars also did a photocall in Portland Place which gained it coverage in papers like *The Guardian* the next day. The following Monday, Baker did a charity parachute jump after being approached by the Red Devils, and had managed to persuade some of his friends, including Nathan-Turner and Seward, to join him. With no attendance required by the BBC, June saw Nicola Bryant appearing in *The Secret Garden* on stage in Leicester.

During June, the BBC considered publishing *Doctor Who* scripts for the first time, but it was some years before such a product would finally appear in the shops.

GRADE FELT A CHANGE OF DOCTOR WOULD HELP BUT NATHAN-TURNER ARGUED THAT BAKER DESERVED TIME TO SETTLE IN. GRADE THEN DELIVERED AN EDICT: MORE FUN, LESS VIOLENCE

deserved time to settle in. Grade delivered an edict that when *Doctor Who* entered production again in Spring 1986, it would have to be more fun and less violent. Discussions also continued with Coast to Coast, and on Tuesday 7 May, Nathan-Turner suggested that Verity Lambert would be a good producer for the film.

By now, Nathan-Turner had written a book about *Doctor Who*; this was *Doctor Who: The TARDIS Inside Out*, published by Piccadilly Press, in which the producer commented on the show's six lead actors alongside illustrations by Andrew Skilliter. The book was published on Thursday 16 May, the author attending a signing at London's Forbidden Planet on Saturday 25 May and being interviewed by Sue Cook on *Breakfast Time* on Wednesday 29 May. The same day, *Doctor Who* came under the spotlight of TV critic Stuart Lang on *Take Two*. In tandem with *The TARDIS Inside Out*, WH Allen published *The Doctor Who Cookbook* in which Gary Downie collected together favourite recipes of the series' cast and crew.

Around late May, Nathan-Turner was summoned to Powell's office and informed that when Season Twenty-Three entered production it would be curtailed to 14 episodes, each of 25 minutes – thus maintaining the promise made by Cotton that *Doctor Who* would be on for a "greater number of

Peri would be written out after the first two four-part stories, and then a new companion, Melanie, would be introduced for the final three two-part stories; Melanie would be a red-headed, keep-fit computer programmer from Pease Pottage. The new stories would show adventures in the Doctor's past, present and future as evidence at the trial akin to Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*, and on Tuesday 9 July, a meeting was held at Threshold House for the four writers the team wanted to develop the scripts. The first four-part story and the concluding two episodes were allocated to a recovered Robert Holmes – establishing the initial threat and mystery and its resolution. Peri's swansong would then be a sequel to *Vengeance* on Varos by Philip Martin. After this would come two two-part stories from the Doctor's future with the new companion Mel, to be written by two Play for Today playwrights: David Halliwell and the outspoken Jack Trevor Story.

By now, the news of the 14-episode run had been inadvertently leaked when BBC Enterprises faxed information on the new season to the wrong number – and the bulletin was read by Ron Katz of the DWfCA rather than the BBC's North American distribution company, Lionheart. When Baker and Nathan-Turner flew out to attend Creation's Panopticon New Orleans event over Friday 12 to Sunday 14 July; they were joined by Levine who, while holidaying in Miami, had been phoned by Nathan-Turner and invited as



another guest as the series adviser. It was now that Levine saw the BBC fax erroneously sent to Katz. Back in England, the *Young Observer* magazine of Sunday 14 ran one of an increasing number of items which focused on the fans – in this case the DWAS – rather than the programme. Nathan-Turner returned to London to find a missive from his colleague director/producer Terence Dudley dated Tuesday 16 in which Dudley offered to take over as producer on Doctor Who if the BBC wanted a change of production staff. Wednesday 17 then saw the home video release of the first monochrome Doctor Who story by BBC Enterprises – an edited version of the Patrick Troughton serial *The Seeds of Death*.

Thursday 25 July saw the first two instalments of *Slipback* broadcast on Pirate Radio 4 as the children's strand took to the air for the first of its three weekly shows, although since the series was on Radio 4 VHF only it could not be received in Scotland, Wales or Ireland. The following day, Jack Trevor Story was commissioned for his two-part story under the working title of *The Second Coming* to be delivered by Monday 5 August. Story never truly got to grips with the series' format, and Seward recalled that he was obsessed with the vision of a man playing a saxophone inside a gasometer.

After its enforced hiatus, Panopticon VI was held at the Hotel Metropole in Brighton over Friday 26 to Sunday 28 July and the guest line-up included Bryant alongside Troughton, Pertwee and Davison; Nathan-Turner and Colin Baker were however at the TimeCon convention in San Jose the same weekend. *The War Machines* was screened, and rumours abounded of somebody owning 16mm prints of *The Fearless Ones* Episode 3 and *The Evil of the Daleks* Episode 2. Graham Williams was also present, explaining how *The Nightmare Fair* was on hold. During July, the first British Doctor Who calendar was issued by Andrew Skilleter's *Who Dares* company, and David Halliwell delivered his first draft of *Attack from the Mind*. Unfortunately, the repeats which Nathan-Turner had pushed for over the summer were not scheduled.

In spite of the BBC's rebuttal, *The Sun* maintained its 14-episode story and ran an item about it on Saturday 3 August, now referring to the misplaced Enterprises fax. The rift between Seward and Nathan-Turner was slowly growing; Seward was working more from home and did not attend a surprise birthday party for the producer held on Jacqueline Pearce's houseboat in Chelsea. Nathan-Turner travelled up to Edinburgh with both Terrance Dicks and "Cuddles" the Dalek to promote a Doctor Who Day at the Edinburgh Book Festival on Saturday 17 August; the Dalek at King's Cross station was another excellent piece of publicity for press photographers. Target considered publishing a collection of their cover artwork, but the notion was abandoned the next year.

Seward had a completed second draft of *Attack from the Mind* by Thursday



Partners in time: A bearded Baker and a bouncing Bonnie promote the Doctor's battle with the Vervoids. Above: Mel and the Doctor explore the strange world created by the Valeyard within the Matrix.

22 August, and the Leisure Hive II Convention – with Colin Baker amongst the guests – was held in Swindon on Saturday 24. Friday 30 then saw Baker and Bryant joining Nathan-Turner up at the Blackpool Doctor Who Exhibition, arriving in Bessie to spend a day with underprivileged children; all the receipts for the day were then donated to the BBC's annual *Children in Need* appeal. *World International's Doctor Who Annual 1986* appeared in August – and would turn out to be the final such volume after two decades when World detected a decline in sales; WH Smith also licenced material from previous annuals to compile a collection under the title *Doctor Who Special* from Galley Press. In the meantime, Peri joined the Doctor and Frobisher for comic strip adventures in *The Doctor Who Magazine*.

With a storyline for the opening instalments agreed, scripts for *Wasteland* were commissioned from Holmes at the start of September; set on an Earth of the far future, this would establish the threat to the Doctor of a Time Lord court and establish a conspiracy surrounding him. Halliwell delivered a third draft of *Attack from the Mind* on Wednesday 11 September; this saw the Doctor's interference on another planet provoke bloodshed between the rodent-like Freds and the highly advanced Penelopeps. Martin was asked for his BBC staff contribution, *The Planet of Sil*, two days later; set on Sil's home world of Thoros Beta, this would climax with the death of Peri after a series of brain experiments. The production team formally reassembled for the new season on Monday 16, and the next day, Halliwell visited Seward to get some guidance on his scripts; this led to a fourth draft being developed in the space of 24 hours on Thursday 26 September. The future of Doctor Who still seemed uncertain, and on Sunday 29 September the *Sunday People* erroneously reported that Season Twenty-Three had indeed been cancelled. Who Dares continued to issue more items such as bookmarks and art cards, Collins entered the merchandise frenzy with a pocket diary and WH Allen published *The Doctor Who Illustrated A-Z* which showcased the illustrations of Lesley Stranding. WH Allen was also considering a book about the making of *The Mark of the Rani*, but this was vetoed by Nathan-Turner. The buoyant US market led to discussions about a touring exhibition of props and costumes from the series, organised by Lionheart, BBC Enterprises and Monarch International; it was the idea of local radio publicity officer Brian Sloman. Against such interest in the show however, it was a shock when the DWAS revealed that it was close to bankruptcy.

Proving that Doctor Who was still in the public eye – but also that its



cliches were ripe for attack – Lenny Henry took on the mantle of the Doctor in a sketch that compared the Thatcher government to the Cybermen in *The Lenny Henry Show* on Thursday 3 October; “Perry” was played by Jodie Rivas and the sketch, written by Kim Fuller, had been recorded on Tuesday 30 April. Halliwell delivered a fifth version of *Attack from the Mind* on Monday 7 October, but this was still not what Saward wanted for the new season. With the episodes from Jack Trevor Story also proving unusable, the production team abandoned the notion of two two-part stories and opted to concentrate on a single four-part narrative. *Attack from the Mind* was abandoned on Friday 18 October, the same day that Nigel Robinson of W.H. Allen approached Nathan-Turner asking if their Target imprint could start to publish original Doctor Who novels; the hiatus of the television show meant that the company were fast working their way through the back catalogue of scripts. Nathan-Turner deferred a decision on this until January 1987.

The replacement scripts were commissioned from Christopher Bidmead under the title *The Last Adventure* on Tuesday 29 October. Quickly retitled *Pinocheco* – a Greek term for a gallery of pictures – the story had the Doctor being asked to investigate a planet which encapsulated all the special times and places in the universe. Bidmead was aware that his material was a quick fix for two collapsed stories and, after agreeing a storyline with Saward, set to work. In the meantime, *Open Space* rejected Nathan-Turner’s proposed *Splendid Chaps All of Them* and the Blackpool Doctor Who Exhibition closed its doors after its 1985 season for what would turn out to be the last time. A third Doctor Who quiz book was published from Target, while *Who Dares Issued Timeview*, a tribute to the Doctor Who illustrations of Frank Bellamy.

FanAid North was staged in Leeds on Saturday 2 November, raising money for both Ethiopia and the Bradford Foothall Disaster Fund with the help of guests like Louise Jameson and Graham Williams; a FanAid Cymru was also held on Saturday 23 November. Nathan-Turner attended the Genesis convention in Manchester on Saturday 16 November and found that he was now being openly criticised by fans during his discussion; he explained that he was writing a second book for Piccadilly, denied that there had ever been



Trial style: Left, Colin prepares for immortal combat. Above: Lynda Bellingham (the Inquisitor) and Colin on the ornate Trial Room set. Below: Bonnie and Colin reach for the stars at the presscall announcing new companion Melanie on the set of *Peter Pan* at the Aldwych Theatre.

a golfing story and claimed that the production team had 38 different scripts to choose from for the new season. On Friday 22 November, Colin Baker, Peter Davison, Patrick Troughton and Jon Pertwee led 22 guests (including a Dalek and TARDIS models) into studio for *Children in Need*, presenting cheques for the money raised at Blackpool and by the DWAS as well as celebrating 22 years of Doctor Who. The following Thursday, Bryant was contracted to make eight episodes of the new season between March and July 1986.

Coast to Coast outlined their film proposal to BBC Enterprises in November, citing actors such as Denholm Elliott, Steven Berkoff, Caroline Munro, Tim Curry and Laurence Olivier who wished to be involved; Mike Oldfield of Tubular Bells fame was to do the music, Dick Lester was suggested as director, Douglas Adams would be script editor and it was claimed that Robert Holmes – then working on the first segment of the next season – would be the writer. The BBC treated the submission cautiously; Powell wanted any such venture kept in-house.

December 1985 saw the paperback publication of *Doctor Who – The Two Doctors* by Robert Holmes, the hundredth Doctor Who novelisation from Target Books. A new BBC2 archive show called *Windmill* screened a section of the 1977 *Whose Doctor Who* documentary from *The Lively Arts* on Sunday 1 December, with an extract from *The War Games* Episode Ten the following week. Stuart Evans and his model Daleks appeared on *Pebble Mill of One* on Tuesday 10 December, while the media fan focus continued as the third edition of *The Enthusiasts* was devoted to *The Whorians* on Wednesday 11. Broadcast on Radio 4 at 9.30pm, this fifteen minute show had been recorded at Panopticon VI during July, and was somewhat dismissive of both the series and its following. Baker was appearing in *Aladdin* at Hayes in Middlesex from Thursday 12, and voiced his disappointment when the BBC formally announced that the new season would indeed only be 14 episodes on Wednesday 18. In the meantime, the *Express* carried a story on Tuesday 17 about how the BBC had refused Coast to Coast a licence for their proposed seven million pound Doctor Who movie.



In order to give the show maximum publicity for its return, Nathan-Turner wanted to cast a well known actress in the role of Melanie. In 1984 he had met actress, dancer and former child star Bonnie Langford and knew that Langford would be interested in appearing in the series. The character of Melanie suited Langford exactly, and Nathan-Turner approached the actress’ agent, Barry Burnett, who was also Colin Baker’s agent. After a brief meeting with Nathan-Turner in December, Langford was offered the part and accepted; this was another piece of

casting which Saward felt was wrong for the programme. Rumours of Langford’s casting soon started to circulate, and when Levine heard he phoned Nathan-Turner at home to check on this; the producer denied the “silly” rumour, asking where it had originated.

Baker continued to keep busy up to Christmas with appearances on *Tyne Tees’ Cross-Wits* game show and a variety show. In the meantime, Bryant was star-



Left: Colin and Nicola step out in style to promote the long-awaited Season Twenty-Three. Above: The Matrix revisited; The Valeyard (Michael Jayston) proves to be, quite literally, the Sixth Doctor's ultimate foe. © BBC

ring in panto in Stevenage as Snow White from Saturday 21 December. As the traumatic year of 1985 drew to a close, John Ostrander's *The Inheritors of Time* was again announced for performance the following year; the fact that after two years there had still been insufficient interest to stage the *Doctor Who* play indicated that maybe the limit of Stateside *Doctor Who* enthusiasm had been reached, and the bubble was about to burst...

During this time, Bidmead had continued to work closely in conjunction with Seward to ensure that *Pinochthea* was what the production office wanted; a second draft of the serial was delivered on Thursday 9 January 1986. Then all fell silent and Bidmead waited for comments – as did Nathan-Turner who was concerned that some of the ideas in the script might be difficult to visualise on screen. Baker and Bryant did their last panto performances on Saturday 11 January while – for the first time in four years – a new season of *Doctor Who* failed to debut on BBC1. Added to this, both *The Times* and *The Daily Telegraph* ran items on the series on Tuesday 14, debating the future that the series had to look forward to; David Hewson of *The Times* claimed that the season would be left open-ended to allow the BBC to kill the show off if necessary. Around now, Holmes delivered his first scripts for the trial season, titled *The Mysterious Planet*.

Baker was contracted for the new season on Thursday 16 January, with a further option on a minimum of 14 more episodes to be made from March to August 1987 – the option to be exercised by the BBC by Friday 31 October. The following Thursday, Baker was hosted aloft on Kirby Wires alongside his new co-star Bonnie Langford at the Aldwych Theatre where Langford was starring in *Peter Pan*; the pair had previously worked together in *Goldilocks* at Lincoln in 1981. The press came in force with items in the *Evening Standard* the same day and in most tabloids the next morning – along with some observations about how

tour of *Peter Pan*. With the third story still not worked out, but the scripts for the first eight episodes in place, Seward pressed ahead and commissioned Holmes for the two-part conclusion under the working title *Time Inc.* In the meantime, on Friday 7 February, Seward informed Bidmead that his scripts would not be used. This came as a massive shock to Bidmead who had believed that Seward was happy with the material throughout its development. Because of the delay in Seward's response after delivery, Bidmead contacted Nathan-Turner and was eventually able to secure payment.

The replacement serial, *End of Time*, was commissioned the following Monday from P J Hammond, the creator of *Sapphire and Steel* amongst other programmes. Another blow was to come the following Monday as Powell delivered – for the first time – a detailed set of comments on the first seven scripts of the season. His response was not good, and the result was that various rewrites were necessary, particularly to Holmes' *The Mysterious Planet*. This came as a major blow to Nathan-Turner and Seward – who were sure they had delivered what Powell had wanted – and also for Robert Holmes, who was becoming ill again.

Nathan-Turner was now starting to think about the look of the new season. On Friday 28 February he informed Oliver Elmes of the Graphics Department that he would not be changing the title sequence. Simultaneously was in discussions with freelance musician Dominic Glynn to provide incidental scores for the season, in a move away from the BBC Radiophonic Workshop whom he had brought on to score the series in 1980. Friday 28 also saw the first of the new season's guest regulars engaged in the form of Lynda Bellingham who would play the Inquisitor throughout the run; she would be contracted on Tuesday 25 March.

Rapidly, Hammond delivered his scripts for *Paradise Five* (the new title for *End of Time*); in this, the Doctor and Mel investigate a leisure moon to find the proprietors selling their visitors into alien slavery. While Seward liked this, Nathan-Turner felt it was unsuitable. Needing a script in a lift at Television Centre on Friday 28 February and immediately asked them to develop a storyline and first script for a replacement four-parter. The Bakers worked over the weekend and delivered a draft the following Monday; on the strength of this, the couple were commissioned for *The Ultimate Fear* – a murder mystery on a space liner involving a species of alien plant – the following Thursday, with a requirement to deliver all four scripts within a month.

SAWARD CRITICISED THE PRODUCER'S SELECTION OF DIRECTORS, CASTING OF 'LIGHT ENTERTAINMENT' ACTORS AND THE AMOUNT OF TIME HE DEVOTED TO CONVENTIONS

Baker had put on a little weight during the hiatus. The announcement also featured on BBC1's *Newsround* the same day. Levine was aghast to hear the news which Nathan-Turner had denied to him a few weeks earlier. Shortly afterwards when Nathan-Turner came to visit Levine for notes on his new book, Levine decided not to see him; his period of assisting the producer was over.

Nathan-Turner flew over to Florida for OmniCon with Patrick Troughton over the weekend of Thursday 30 January to Sunday 2 February; on his return, he found a memo from Seward in which his fears about the script editor's silence over *Pinochthea* confirmed; the script was not suitable and Seward found it dull and out of character with the other episodes. Seward also reminded the producer to arrange for Baker and Langford to come in and do the test piece for the Melanie character, prior to Langford's departure from London on a provincial

During the rest of March, rewrites continued on *The Mysterious Planet* and Holmes delivered the first script for *Time Inc* in which it was revealed that the Valeyard was the Doctor's final evil incarnation. In the meantime, the Bakers drafted scripts for *The Ultimate Fear* – which they referred to as *The Veroids* – and requested feedback from Seward. However, Seward was now often working from home on rewrites and was concerned about the state of Holmes health; the veteran writer had become a good friend whom he admired, and Powell's comments on the scripts had left scars.

Anthony Ainley was booked for the concluding two episodes on Tuesday 1 April, and by now Nathan-Turner had decided to have Glynn rearrange Ron Grainer's theme tune for the new season. As the Bakers kept Seward informed of all the work on *The Veroids*, Colin Baker and Nicola Bryant resumed their roles



Above: Roger Brierley gets into heavy metal as Drathro in *Trial Parts One to Four*. Right: "Will someone get that bloody phone?" Joan Sims... in make-up for Katryca, makes a prank call. Below: Diversion of the Daleks for *Woman's Hour*. etc.



as the Doctor and Peri for a location rehearsal on *The Mysterious Planet* on Friday 4, ready for location recording on OB videotape from the following Tuesday – 16mm film now having been abandoned for location shooting. By now though, Holmes was very ill with his liver complaint, and Seward agreed to script the final episode of the season from the narrative which he and the writer had agreed; the climax would see the Doctor and the Valeyard locked in combat, tumbling into a time vent which the Valeyard had opened in an attempt to destabilise the structure of the universe. As such, the season would end on a cliff-hanger as the Keeper of the Matrix informed Mel that the Doctor and Valeyard were likely trapped for eternity.

The press attended a photocall for the series on location at Butser Hill on Thursday 10 April, and various papers such as the *Daily Express* ran items in the coming days; by now, the decision had been taken to give the new series an epic feel by retitling all four of the narratives *The Trial of a Time Lord* and so make it the "longest story" in the series history. With location work complete, the next big event was the launch of the new Doctor Who travelling exhibition. A 48 foot long van had been crafted by Vanplan in Warrington and dressed by designer Tony Burrough and artist Andrew Skilleter to ferry props and costumes around the States – although



GRADE INFORMED NATHAN-TURNER THAT THE SEASON WAS AN IMPROVEMENT ... BUT HE STILL WASN'T ENTIRELY HAPPY

in turn this had meant the closure of BBC Enterprises' large exhibition at Blackpool after 11 years. Baker, Bryant, Nathan-Turner and Janet Fielding were amongst those seeing the trailer off from Elstree on Thursday 17 April – an event covered by *Newsround*. On Friday 18, the trailer was unfortunately dropped while being loaded at Liverpool docks; by now, Nathan-Turner was on his way to America for a DWCEA festival in Washington.

By now, Seward was on leave from the Doctor Who office, pending a renewal of his contract; he was hoping to have Part Fourteen of *The Trial of a Time Lord* completed shortly. As such, Nathan-Turner took over the role of script editor. On Wednesday 23 April – the day before studio recording on the first segment began – it was confirmed that the role of the Valeyard would be played by Michael Jayston throughout the run. Langford made one of her first public appearances in association with Doctor Who on Thursday 1 May when she joined Ainley and Troughton to launch an Anti-Litter Campaign in Birmingham; a few days later, Fan Aid handed over a cheque for £2,163 raised by Doctor Who fans.

Nathan-Turner was now attempting to control unlicensed Doctor Who merchandise, and planned a "raid" on one store in particular; this exercise went badly wrong with the shop being warned in advance. On his return to the production office, he found that Seward had handed in his resignation from the series. Nathan-Turner met with Powell who indicated that no other script editors were available, and asked if Seward could be coaxed back. The former script editor explained to Powell his unease over some of Nathan-Turner's recent decisions, notably the casting of Bonnie Langford.

On Friday 9 May, the Doctor Who travelling exhibition was launched in Washington DC by Michael Grade and Peter Davison; back in England, Nathan-Turner supervised more studio recording and guided the Bakers with the final episodes of their Vervoid narrative. Studio recording on Holmes' episodes at Television Centre precluded current guests and staff from the series from

attending MonsterCon in Liverpool that weekend. Wednesday 14 May saw another planned premiere date for a professional run of *The Inheritors of Time* come and go without realisation, while the following day saw the publication of *Turlough* and the *Earthlink Dilemma* by Tony Attwood, the first in a proposed new series of paperback adventures from Target showcasing *The Companions of Doctor Who*. Also issued was *Doctor Who – The Early Years*, a hardback from WH Allen by Doctor Who historian Jeremy Bentham which studied the formative days of the series.

With the four Vervoid scripts delivered, Nathan-Turner was able to travel to New Brunswick for a *Spirit of Light*

convention with Langford, Troughton and other guests from Friday 23 to Monday 26 May; Baker meanwhile attended NorwichCon the same weekend. Meanwhile, Robert Holmes had lapsed into a coma at Stoke Mandeville Hospital. He died on Saturday 24 May.

A shaken and upset Seward informed Nathan-Turner of Holmes' death as rehearsals for the *Mindwarp* episodes continued the following week, leading up to recording. The production was being covered by a crew for the French science fiction documentary series *Temps X*. French station TF1 had just purchased a batch of dubbed Tom Baker serials and wanted an item to launch the run; studio work was covered on Wednesday 28 May, followed by material on effects the following day and a visit to the London branch of *Forbidden Planet* on the Saturday. This was another weekend for Langford and Nathan-Turner to attend an America event – this time *WhoVent* in Wisconsin.

By now, Seward had delivered a script of the final episode, but Nathan-Turner was having reservations about its style. The downturn ending with the Doctor supposedly trapped ran the risk of seeing the show cancelled for good if it had failed to perform, and the producer was also unhappy with the notion of Peri being killed off after all. There had been several attempts between the producer and his former script editor to find a middle ground, but on Wednesday 4 June Seward indicated that he could not make the amendments that Nathan-Turner



Above: Klu (Christopher Ryan) gets some help making his mind up in *Trial/Parts Five to Eight*. Right: Brian Blessed's upstaging claims another victim. Below: "There was a young girl from Pease Pottage..."

required and decided to withdraw his script. With rehearsals for the episodes little under a fortnight away and locations already planned, Nathan-Turner contacted Pip and Jane Baker whom he knew could deliver a workable script to a tight deadline.

At the same time as *Mindwarp* was completing recording and Nicola Bryant left the series, the Doctor and Peri were having adventures in Blackpool Pleasure Beach after all in the form of David McGrouther and Julie Sharrock. *Hot Ice 86* opened at the Ice Drome on Saturday 14 June for a 20 week run, including an eight minute *Doctor Who* adventure in which Peri's search for her long lost brother meant skirmishes with the Master, Daleks, dinosaurs and 'Cybernoids'.

The Bakers had produced a new climax for the episode which met Nathan-Turner's requirements in one week – allowing OB recording at Brighton to start at the end of June as scheduled. *Doctor Who* was kept in the public eye when a BBC Dalek was up for grabs as part of the Women's Hour Auction to raise money for projects in Sudan, covered by BBC News on Friday 27 June. Ainley travelled to TimeCon in San José – to find that the enthusiasm for *Doctor Who* was diminishing slightly. In the meantime, Severn House issued the first of their 'Choose Your Own Adventure' books; two similar books had already been issued in America by FASA. And on Monday 30 July, Langford did her first OB recording for *Doctor Who* as Mel Bush; Les Wilson of Picture Publicity arranged for Langford to pose for publicity shots in the real Pease Pottage against the advice of Nathan-Turner who insisted there was no point in making this journey simply for a roadsign that read 'Pease Pottage'.

Auctioned at Christies, the Dalek was sold for £4,200 on Thursday 4 July; six days later, *Travels Without TARDIS*, a book about locations in *Doctor Who* written by two prominent American fan writers, was published by Target. *The War Machines* screened at the National Film Theatre on Saturday 12 July as part of the Past Visions of the Future season of British Telefantasy, and production continued on the concluding two episodes of the new season. On Wednesday 16 July, Sydney Newman, the former BBC Head of Drama who had been instrumental in creating *Doctor Who* in 1963, wrote to Nathan-Turner to see if he could have a 'created by' credit on future episodes; the producer refused the request.

As work began on the studio-bound Vervoid episodes, Colin Baker, Philip Martin and Pip and Jane Baker were amongst the guests at FalCon in Bath over Saturday 19 and Sunday 20 July, while the *Sunday People* announced Bryant's departure from the series. The Sun previewed the revamped season under the headline Sort Out Saves Doctor on Saturday 2 August, and the series was promoted in the BBC Press Conference for the Autumn Season at the Lancaster Gate Hotel on Thursday 7 where Grade congratulated Nathan-Turner on the first of the new episodes. The final studio session for the Vervoid narrative was due to conclude on Thursday 14 August, and it was arranged that on the same day Baker would do a promotional interview for BBC's daytime feedback programme *Open Air* and pre-record an introduction for an edition of *Roland Rat: The Series*, a new puppet show which would be spearheading BBC's Saturday night lineup. While an item in the *Daily Mail* on the final studio day warned that the show's future was still uncertain in Grade's eyes, it was another article which caused greater



concern for Nathan-Turner as recording on *The Trial of a Time Lord* was completed.

The SF magazine *Starburst* carried an interview entitled *The Revelations of a Script Editor* in Issue 97 in which Eric Seward gave frank comments on why he had left *Doctor Who* – with an emphasis on his inability to work any longer with Nathan-Turner; he criticised the producer's selection of directors, casting of "light entertainment" actors and the amount of time which had been devoted to American conventions. The article came as a major blow to the producer and the team as a whole, and was a turning point in fandom's support of the producer whom it was felt had revitalised the series. Nathan-Turner sought legal advice over the article, but Powell recommended that he should not pursue any action. It was an unsettled producer who attended the festivities of the season wrap party on Thursday 14 August.

Nicola Bryant made an appearance at CyberCon staged at UMIST in Manchester on Saturday 16 and Sunday 17 August, and on Tuesday 19, the BBC Press Officer confirmed that – contrary to rumours – there would be a Season Twenty-Four for *Doctor*

Who. As post-production continued on *The Trial of a Time Lord*, visual effects designer Mat Irvine's book *Doctor Who: Special Effects* was published by Beaver on Friday 22, and the following weekend a bearded Colin Baker was amongst the guests at Leisure Hive III in Swindon. The following day, Baker, Bellingham and a few monsters arrived by TARDIS on Wogan as part of the publicity launch for the new season. There was further press coverage on Saturday 30 August from *The Sun* and *The Times* – although the focus of attention was the *Starburst* interview from Seward about the producer.

On Wednesday 3 September, BBC Drama producer Ken Riddington wrote to inform Sydney Newman that he would not be getting a credit on new episodes of *Doctor Who*; undeterred, the producer wrote to Michael Grade, suggesting that they meet up to discuss rejuvenating the series. When Newman suggested lunch, Grade agreed and invited his guest to submit ideas to revamp *Doctor Who*.

The Thursday 4 September edition of *Radio Times* launched the new season with a large article entitled *Guess Who's Back at Last*; the furor of his return to the screen as the Doctor was partially spoilt for Baker when a speeding offence





Above: Court in the act as Colin and Bonnie share a joke between takes. Right: On the set of the *Hyperion III*, former Avenger Honor Blackman takes a leaf out of Lasky's book and teaches the Vervoids (below) a lesson in growing old gracefully! © BBC



caused him to be banned from driving for three months the day before *The Trial of a Time Lord* made its debut. Various papers promoted the epic serial on Saturday 6 September; Langford appeared on BBC's *Saturday Picture Show* that morning while Baker, Bryant, Nathan-Turner, Pip and Jane Baker, Davison, Pertwee and many others attended Panopticon VII at Imperial College in South Kensington that weekend. The *Temps X* documentary was screened to preview the Sil episodes, and a party atmosphere reigned as *The Trial of a Time Lord* was shown to the fans. Nathan-Turner announced that he was leaving the series.

The following Monday, Baker, Langford and Nahil Shahan pre-recorded an item previewing the new season for *Blue Peter*; the transmission of this was delayed to Thursday 18 September. By now, other publications were picking up on Saward's departure; the BBC gave little comment to the *London Standard* on Tuesday 9 September, and it also featured in *Television Today* on Thursday 11. The American interest in the show was emphasised by *Breakfast Time* on Thursday 11 as it covered Louise Jameson's attendance on a Doctor Who roadshow across the Atlantic. On Saturday 13, the same day as his Roland Rat insert was broadcast, Colin Baker was in Washington attending a *Spirit of Light* event and appearing with Grade as one of the stars of the BBC to sell shows to the American market; he and Tom Baker did various promotions in America for the next fortnight.

Most aspects of the show – apart from Dominic Glynn's new theme arrangement – received praise on *Points of View* on Wednesday 17 September, and Peter Haining's third book on the series, *The Doctor Who File*, was published by WH Allen the next day. Langford embarked on another tour of Peter Pan, kicking off in Cardiff on Tuesday 23.

On Monday 6 October, Newman submitted his proposed revamp of Doctor Who, asking if he could be made executive producer in lieu of a fee should his ideas be adopted. Newman felt that "out-in-space, other-planet adventures" were old hat and suggested that they only formed the basis for half the future stories on the series – and if used, this format should have a mythic or parable element relating to the viewers own lives. His thrust was towards Earth based stories with a twist, exploiting wonders of technology, science and topical Green issues. Suggested setting were "inside a human body (child) involved in a war between her life and cancer cells ... inside a NASA shuttle a polaris submarine etc, in which of course something dreadful happens ... return to Earth the size of ants while human ecologists are trying to stop farmers using DDT ... involved in a mutiny on one of Christopher Columbus' ships ..." Newman was keen that the characters



should experience adventures which "engage the concerns, fears and curiosity of today's audience of all ages" as opposed to what he saw as the show's current "largely socially valueless escapist schlock". For the characters, Newman indicated "Doctor Who himself should see the return of Patrick Troughton – still the not-quite-there tramp from outer-space". The Doctor would be "innocent, almost child-like" and would find a way to avoid the pitfalls and traps that he and his companions would encounter. "The important fact is that Doctor Who

does not know how to control his time-space machine" stressed Newman. He then continued to say that "at a later stage, Doctor Who should be metamorphosed into a woman" which he admitted would require considerable thought; Newman felt confident that he could devise such a Doctor and a hoorish *Wonder Woman* type of heroine.

To accompany Doctor Who would be two Earthlings. The first is "A homesick girl of 12 wearing John Lennon-type Dickensian spectacles (she's stylish) ... played a trumpet in the school orchestra ... it's the one possession she values most ... her high notes can smash glass, and sometimes it signals the advance to battle or retreat from danger. Sometimes it irritates Doctor Who when he's trying to think ..." The second was to be the girl's 'yobbo, over self-confident brother of 18, who with his aerosol can graffiti the heavens. He's headstrong ... protective of (his sister), knowing that if any harm befalls her his parents (unseen) would 'kill him' ... Clearly he thinks Doctor Who is 'way past it'!"

Grade suggested that Newman should meet with Powell to discuss the format, but in their subsequent meeting Newman and Powell did not get on well and the

ideas were not adopted.

Unfortunately, the audiences for the new season were not good and the new BBC Saturday line-up was hammered by ITV; the much-publicised Roland Rat failed to appear in the top 100 shows and Doctor Who opened to less than five million viewers – the lowest first run audience since 1980. Running against Doctor Who on ITV was – yet again – *The A-Team* which was sustaining an audience of about ten million. Although audience appreciation was stronger for Doctor Who's new season, the audiences then started to fall to the three million mark.



Worry for the show's future manifested itself in the *Sunday Express* on Sunday 12 October where critic John Russell indicated that the show was back on form but apparently still under threat. More episodes from the Troughton and Pertwee eras were being screened at a Bradford Film Theatre, and *The Chase* was being considered to appear as part of the BBC's TV50 celebrations in November.

Leading up to her debut on the show, Langford appeared on *Wogan* on Friday 17 October and attended a press launch for Part Nine with Baker, Nathan-Turner and Pip and Jane Baker on Monday 20 October – the same day that Nathan-Turner promoted his new book, *Doctor Who: The Companions*, on BBC Breakfast Time alongside Janet Fielding and Nicola Bryant, and an item about the Sevans Daleks appeared on *Blue Peter*. The popular press printed photos from the publicity session the next day, but simultaneously Grade – now Director of Programmes – informed Nathan-Turner that the new season was “an improvement – but I’m still not happy”. He indicated that he had plans for next season.

Although the press coverage was continuing and so was Baker's demand at public appearances, there was still apparently no decision on the show's future with only a week to go before the BBC's option on his services expired. Nathan-Turner attempted to establish other series to move onto, and was told that he could leave *Doctor Who* at the end of November after completing one last task – informing Baker that his contract was not to be renewed. As rumours about Baker not continuing started to grow, Nathan-Turner telephoned the actor at home on Wednesday 29 October to break the

bad news – Baker was shocked and upset. Grade and Powell had instructed the producer that three years was enough and a new Doctor was needed to boost the show. Colin Baker – who had hoped to break Tom Baker's record of seven years on *Doctor Who* – was now being forcibly retired after a mere 31 episodes.

Jan Marter, who had played Harry Sullivan and written various novelisations of *Doctor Who*, died on Thursday 30 October, the same day that the *Radio Times* promoted Part Nine of *The Trial of a Time Lord* with the article “Bonnie's Just What the Doctor Ordered”; various newspapers covered Langford's debut on Saturday 1 November. Golden Wonder launched a major promotional campaign in November with *Doctor Who Adventure Comics* in multi-packs of their snacks; these were abridged reprints of some recent Marvel comic strips, with Peri removed. With the news of his departure still secret, Baker made another parachute jump to raise money for the Cot Death Foundation on Sunday 2 November, and was interviewed by Peter Dickinson on Radio 2's *Nightline* on Friday 14 November. Again, *Doctor Who* was involved with Children in Need, and Derek Jameson auctioned a police box prop on his Radio 2 show for £3,100 on 21 November.

On Friday 28 November, it was Nathan-Turner's turn to receive a bombshell. The producer was preparing to go on leave to direct his annual pantomime – *Cinderella* starring Colin Baker in Brighton – when he was called to see Powell



Left: The sands of time are running out on location at Camber Sands, as cast and crew prepare for the Doctor's final showdown at the climax of *The Trial of a Time Lord*. Above: “Leave the curl – it's the man I want!” the Sixth Doctor's hasty, pre-credit regeneration at the opening of Season Twenty-Four. © BBC

and informed that he would not be leaving *Doctor Who* after all. Nathan-Turner protested but was shown out; Riddington informed the producer that he had done his job on *Doctor Who* too well – and was now trapped on the show.

News of Baker's departure from the series was rumoured in *The Mirror* on Saturday 29 November, with Nathan-Turner refusing to comment on the report that Langford had been recontracted, but the show's star had not. The same morning, Baker appeared as happy as possible – though, significantly, not in costume – alongside members of the DWAS on *Saturday Superstore*.

The closing instalments of the new season met with heavy criticism in the *Daily Express* on Tuesday 2 December, and there was stormy reception in wait on *Open Air* from the fans on Monday 8, two days after the season concluded with Nathan-Turner's preferred upbeat ending. Host Patti Caldwell, who admitted she was no fan of the series, chaired a discussion between Pip and Jane Baker and a dissatisfied Merseyside Local Group, with Nathan-Turner contributing on the phone from Brighton. Only the Stage and TV Today commented that they found the final episode “refreshing” in their review of Wednesday 17 December.

Cinderella opened at the Theatre Royal on Friday 12 December – and the next day, *The Sun* broke the news that Colin Baker had been “sacked” from *Doctor Who*. By now the BBC seemed to have had a change of heart, and Nathan-Turner tried to arrange for the star to return and do a final four-part story to start Season Twenty-Four before handing over to his predecessor. This would be a final showdown with the Rani written by the Bakers, and the couple telephoned Baker to try to persuade him to accept. Baker recorded an appearance in costume as the Doctor for a Christmas quiz edition of BBC's *Tomorrow's World* on Sunday 14 December, this was broadcast on Thursday 18, the same day that the *Standard* and the *Mail* revealed that Baker had been offered a four-episode deal. The next day, a statement from Baker's agent on *Open Air* made his refusal clear; Spring 1987 would be a vital time for Baker to secure new work. The popular press swung into action with suggestions for the new Doctor the following weekend.

NATHAN-TURNER WAS INFORMED HE HAD DONE HIS JOB ON DOCTOR WHO TOO WELL AND WAS NOW TRAPPED ON THE SHOW...

Early in 1987, a BBC Audience Research report was issued on Season Twenty-Three; many of the comments were negative, with particular criticism of Bonnie Langford's performance as Mel who, according to one respondent, “did not fit in with my image of one of *Doctor Who*'s companions – her screams are particularly annoying”, while another stated “Bonnie Langford gets up my nose”.

At the start of December 1986, *Doctor Who* was in a sorry state. Interest from the American market seemed to have passed its peak, and the much-awaited return of the show after its enforced hiatus had been a ratings disaster. Three years earlier, the series had been basking in the success of its twentieth anniversary with over 20 episodes made a year and fans proclaiming a rebirth for their hero's adventures. Now producer John Nathan-Turner was trapped on a series which he thought he had left. Production on a new 14-episode season was little over four months away. He had no scripts, no script editor and no Doctor.

Colin Baker had put all he could into the role he had always wanted to play and cared so much about. With his departure still a secret to the world at large, his comments on *Saturday Superstore* in November 1986 were even more poignant. Asked where he would travel to if he had a TARDIS, the actor replied: “I think I'd probably go back to the beginning and start all over again, because I've enjoyed doing *Doctor Who* so much...”

The Trial of a Time Lord:

Parts One to Four

Underground **BY GARETH ROBERTS**

DWM ARCHIVE

DWM 289

COMMISSIONING

Mon 2 Sep 85 Wasteland (WIT)
Scripts commissioned for Mon 14
Oct 85; delivered Wed 15 Jan 86

PRODUCTION

Tue 8 Apr 86 Queen Elizabeth
Country Park, Horndean, Hants
[Ravolox]
Wed 9 Apr 86 Queen Elizabeth
Country Park (Area Above
Tunnel)
Thu 10 – Fri 11 Apr 86 Butser
Ancient Farm Project, Pitham
Hill, Hants [Settlement]
Thu 24 Apr 86 Television Centre
Studio 6: Hut; Tunnel; Subway
Fri 25 Apr 86 Television Centre
Studio 6: Subway; Tunnel
Sat 10 May 86 Television Centre
Studio 3: Food Production
Centre; Subway; Castle Ante-
room; Castle Doors; Food Hatch;
Communications Post
Sun 11 May 86 Television Centre
Studio 3: Subway; Castle Doors;
Castle
Mon 12 May 86 Television Centre
Studio 3: Tunnel; Passages;
Trial Room
Fri 13 Jun 86 Television Centre
Studio 6: Trial Room Corridor
(remount)

RADIO TIMES

Sat 6 Sep 86 Part One: The Tardis
is taken 'out of time' and the
Doctor is placed on trial. What,
if any, are his crimes?
Sat 13 Sep 86 Part Two: The
Doctor has been placed on trial
by the Time Lords. If found
guilty, he will forfeit his
remaining lives!
Sat 20 Sep 86 Part Three: ➔



The robot of death: Katryca
and Broken Tooth meet
their maker at the hands of
the Immortal... © BBC



Let's have another post-mortem. The corpse of Doctor Who has been prodded, swabbed and peeled so many many times. There've been hundreds of wild fan-dome theories about the TV series' 1980s demise. Never mind, let's have another one. First off – this is a marvellous script. It's every inch as clever, witty and telling as Robert Holmes' *The Caves of Androzani*. The television realization, on the other hand, is like a school play of *The Tempest*.

If you've some time to spare, and the inclination, grab the novelisation and direct it in your head by Graeme Harper. The Doctor is wearing new clothes, more sombre but with just a dash of crazy colour. He's now back to being an authority figure; an acerbic, blunt, self-regarding dandy with a spine of steel. (And we all know what a difference it makes to our perceptions of Colin Baker's Doctor just by not seeing that bloody patchwork quilt!) The theme music and title sequence are

Sticks and stones: the Doctor finds himself condemned as a water thief by the denizens of UK Habitat. © BBC

an improved version of the 1960s/70s psychedelic time tunnel, and the incidentals are Dudley Simpson's chamber orchestra, not a tinny DX7 – subtly drawing attention away from the budget's shortcomings, not pointing right at them in a big synth mess. The courtroom is dimly-lit and unsettling; just a big wide empty studio. The tunnels of Marb Station are dark and dingy, the shuffling zombies are pallid and lifeless in grey coveralls. The wilderness is blasted Dartmoor. Queen Katryca is played by Judi Dench. The robots of Ravolox are strikingly designed, H R Giger stuff, all oily pistons and clanking joints – they're old and slow, but deadly. Humker and Tandrell are wizened ancient men. The confidence and brio of the script are matched by the energy and vigour of the direction – and everybody's performance is brought down just a notch or two. Would that satisfy you?

Back to reality, and the wider picture. What Doctor Who really needed at this point in its history, like any long-running venture in trouble, was to go back to basics; to return to what made it so successful in the past and brush it up. Trial doesn't do this, coming after five seasons of instability, of chopping and changing, and then a long break. The series desperately needs simple but cracking stories with great monsters. The Doctor needs to be re-established as a lovable moral intellectual. Robert Holmes knows this, and tries to do it, but the framework of the Trial – which calls the Doctor's lifestyle and morals into question yet again, after three years of this – frustrates him. Imagine – again – the impact of the Trial if it had come at the beginning of Season Eighteen, after years of fun but somewhat formulaic adventures (as it did at the end of Season Six).

The Trial of a Time Lord, like the Key to Time, was something to try at a moment of stability, to pep up a successful series. As a reintroduction, it doesn't work; it assumes a familiarity with concepts and characters that are nebulous at best – the Laws of Time – and silly at worst – as French, Saunders and most of the viewing public knew, Doctor Who had a reputation for wordy Time Lords in daft hats and cheap sets. Also, even for those of us that followed Season Twenty-Two, we don't trust this Doctor. He has retained a callous, arbitrary air, and in this context the amendments to his deeds in the Matrix court records aren't as shocking and out of character as they should be.

These four episodes are the Colin Baker era in microcosm – for a great Doctor in an awful get-up, read a great script in the wrong colours.

ARCHIVE EXTRA

① Nicholas Mallett was booked for Serial 7A on Friday 20 December 1985 and joined production on Monday 10 February 1986

② In Robert Holmes' scripts, the three books of Marb read by Balazar the Reader were *Moby Dick*, *The Water Babies* and *UK Habitats of the Canadian Goose*. *Moby Dick*, or *The Whale* was an 1851 novel of the whaling industry by American writer Herman Melville and based on his own experiences on a whaling ship; it concerns the obsessive pursuit of a great whale by the one-legged Captain Ahab of the

Pequod. *The Water Babies*, a *Fairy Tale for a Land Baby* was one of a number of evangelical children's stories written by Charles Kingsley, a nineteenth century English writer, rector and Cambridge academic; the 1863 story concerned a mistreated chimney-sweep, Tom, who was turned into an amphibious creature in the Christian Socialism parable. The third volume was to be an obscure government publication by 'HM Stationary Office'

③ Friday 18 April 1986: The Drama Early Warning Synopsis was issued for *The Trial of a*

Time Lord Parts One to Four, promoting Drathro and his service robots as selling points alongside guest stars Joan Sims and Tony Selby; Michael Jayston was also referred to, although not yet contracted

④ The opening sequence for *The Trial of a Time Lord* was to be the most expensive camera shot for Doctor Who in the 1980s; to hook the audience, John Nathan-Turner devoted over £2000 on a 45-second model shot which took a week to execute at Peerless Studios in Elstree. This involved the six foot

diameter Time Lord space station where the trial was being held, a large fibreglass and plastic model made in six sections to Mike Kell's designs and detailed by his assistant Peter Akass. A motion-controlled camera was moved over the model as the TARDIS was sucked down inside by a shaft of light

● Mike Ellis made the L1 robot as well as operating it

● The gallery only session was on Friday 16 May with the following day spent at the FX Workshop. Editing took place from Monday 2 to Monday 16 June; Part One was re-edited down from its original duration of 25'28" at the end of July

● Dominic Glynn had first spoken to Nathan-Turner about composing for the show at the end of January 1985 and had stayed in touch with the producer during the year. In March 1986, Glynn was invited to submit two test pieces for the first episode of the serial which he duly did on Monday 17 March; he was engaged on the serial two days later. On Thursday 27 March, Glynn was then booked to rearrange Ron Grainer's famous theme tune. This commission came at such short notice that Glynn had barely set up his studio at his East Grinstead home, and set to work in the tiny box room at the top of the semi he shared with his girlfriend. He submitted his first



version on Wednesday 2 April with three further mixes on Sunday 20 April. The new theme was announced in July 1986; as early as Friday 28 February, Nathan-Turner had indicated to graphics designer Oliver Elmes that he would be retaining Sid Sutton's titles used since *The Twin Dilemma*. For the incidental music, Mallett explained to Glynn that he wanted three distinct themes for the serial,

otherwise he allowed the composer total freedom. The episodes were dubbed on Saturday 14 June (Part Two), Saturday 28 June (Part Three), Saturday 12 July (Part One) and Friday 25 and Monday 28 July (Part Four)

● In the *Radio Times*, the programme listing for Part One was accompanied by a shot of the Doctor and the Inquisitor

Pillar to post: Merdeen (Tom Chubb) and Peri (Nicola Bryant) find themselves at the mercy of Drathro. © BBC

➤ The 'Black Light' system is failing! Will the Doctor help? Sat 27 Sep 86 Part Four: Can the Doctor save Ravolox from destruction?

The Trial of a Time Lord:

Parts Five to Eight

My Favourite Waste of Time **BY ALAN BAANES**



A slug's life: the loathesome Sil (Nabil Shaban) returns – as do his marsh minnows. © BBC

and that's it. Her last line is: "So I'm fit and healthy, huh?" Seven minutes and ten seconds later, we learn that Peri's own consciousness – her character – has "ceased to exist". A few moments after that, her body is laser-gunned into oblivion by King Yrcanos. And you thought Dodo had an impromptu exit! [2] Brion Blessed and Patrick Ryecart should have swapped parts. I mean, clearly, Yrcanos, as played by Ryecart, would be a Prince Hal – an over-earnest, noble hothead in a hurry. Crozier, as played by Blessed, would be a Josef Mengele, a sinister bastard exiled from his home. Casting against type is all very well, but here the female lead falls in love with Bluebeard and is murdered by Dr Kildare.

[3] It's *The Underwater Menace*. Isn't it? The TARDIS lands on a beach, where our heroes discover a cave that serves as the entrance to a subterranean complex in which a mad human scientist, served by a big octopus-like monster, elects to perform a grisly surgery on the Doctor's attractive young companion. This gives the lie to the theory that history repeats itself first as tragedy, then as farce.

[4] It's cleverer than *Vengeance on Varos*. The original conceit ran thus: if Doctor Who the series is to be on trial, then why not have Doctor Who the character on trial too? Only Philip Martin – who, let's not forget, has previous form as a post-modernist, what with writing himself into *Gangsters* and using *Vengeance*, a calculatedly sensational mass entertainment, to critique the absolute value of calculatedly sensational mass entertainment – actually bothers to develop the idea beyond two bottles of red on expenses in a Shepherd's Bush trattoria.

few remarkable things about *The Trial of a Time Lord* Parts Five to Eight ...

[1] They kill off Peri between scenes. She's strapped, gagged and chloroformed on Crozier's couch,

DWM ARCHIVE

DWM 249

COMMISSIONING

Fri 13 Sep 85 Staff clearance requested for *The Planet of Sil* for delivery Tue 8 Oct 85; Part One accepted Fri 4 Oct 85, Parts Two to Four accepted Fri 31 Jan 86.

PRODUCTION

Tue 27 May 86 Television Centre
Studio 11: Crozier's Laboratory
Wed 28 May 86 Television Centre
Studio 11: Corridor; Crozier's Laboratory
Thu 29 May 86 Television Centre
Studio 11: Kiv's Chamber; Corridor; Kiv's Profit Room
Wed 11 Jun 86 Television Centre
Studio 6: Corridor; Matrona's Chamber; Tide Control Room; Cell; Tunnel
Thu 12 Jun 86 Television Centre
Studio 6: Small Cavern; Cavern; Alpha Induction Centre; Tunnel; Corridor
Fri 13 Jun 86 Television Centre
Studio 6: Tunnel; Corridor; Trial Room
Sun 15 – Mon 16 Jun 86
Telcombe Cliffs, Peasehaven, E Sussex (Pebble Beach and Cave; Rock of Sorrows)



Colin clammers confidently on the cliffs. © BBC

RRID TIMES

Sat 4 Oct 86 Part Five: The Doctor and Peri arrive on the planet Thoros-Beta where an old enemy awaits.

Sat 11 Oct 86 Part Six: Why is the Doctor behaving so strangely?

Sat 18 Oct 86 Part Seven: Why is the Doctor helping his enemies? Has the evidence been falsified, as the Doctor insists, or has he betrayed his friends?

Sat 25 Oct 86 Part Eight: The transplant operation on Kiv has been a success. However, Crozier fears another body will shortly be required. Whose will it be?

In-fighting as Dorf, Peri and King Yrcanos try to determine the best strategy to wrest power from the Mentors. © BBC

Throughout Parts Five to Eight, it's pretty blatant that Martin is using the form of a four-part Doctor Who narrative to actively critique the form of a four-part Doctor Who narrative. However much got lost or mistranslated, there's purpose written all over the script: in having the Doctor's prosecutor introduce "the Doctor's next frightening adventure"; in assembling such a painfully typical scenario for a Doctor Who adventure (see point 3 above); in dismissing the entirely expected but utterly extraneous TARDIS landing scene as "inconsequential silliness"; and in repeatedly employing phrases loaded with meaning both on the inside and the outside of the fiction – it's no coincidence that the Doctor refers to his friends as "companions", for example. (The script, in fact, is packed full of this sort of thing: the Valeyard's cliffhanging break in evidence after Yrcanos, Tusa, Peri and all are shot down is described as both "somewhat gratuitous" and "shock tactics"; the returning Sil claims that he endeavours "to maintain a certain continuity"; and the elderly Mentor in the induction centre is all but speaking to the audience when he comments on how he is hoping that we – my italics – have seen the last of Yrcanos because "he's such a noisy fellow".) When, shortly into Part Seven, Yrcanos stops to divine the presence of a group of rebels not because he actually knows of their existence but because one always finds a group of rebels in such a scenario, Martin is pushing his luck, but when he has the Valeyard calculate that "the Doctor's companions have been placed in danger twice as often as the

Doctor", he can only be taking the piss. Mindwarp? Headf—k, more like.

[5] The director didn't notice any of the above. The story might just work if he had.

... and one remarkable thing about The Trial of a Time Lord Part Fourteen:

[6] It didn't happen. No, not Part Fourteen, although we can but dream. I mean, the last few minutes of Part Eight, where the Time Lords release their cosmic pause button and Kiv wakes up in Peri's body before Yrcanos bursts in and shoots just about everyone. They put together a genuinely chilling, well-edited scene (Sil's tiny-voiced interjection – "I wish you could have found a more attractive one" – could not be better delivered, cut or paced), and what do we discover in Part Fourteen? That it was all a lie; that the shock was just a scare, and Peri is alive and well. It didn't happen, after all. One is tempted to read this single, petty retraction as symptomatic of the problem of Doctor Who in the last few years of its TV life, up to and including the TV movie they'd make in Vancouver ten whole years later: a desperate desire to be daring, iconoclastic and new, ever thwarted by the imperative to be a continued, reassuring, wholly same.

What a waste of a great scene. What a waste of a great story. What a waste of a great series. What a waste.

ARCHIVE EXTRA

① The scripts were originally commissioned as The Planet of Sil in September 1985 when Philip Martin was on staff as a radio drama producer at Pebble Mill. One of Philip Martin's early suggestions for his script was that some of the Mentors' dialogue should be in their own alien language and translated by subtitles for the viewers. The scripts were accepted by January 1986.

② On Tuesday 8 April 1986, Eric Savard wrote to Martin requesting extra material for Mindwarp; this material was submitted by Martin later in the month by which time John Nathan-Turner had taken over Savard's role. Martin attended most of the studio recordings

③ The original costume design on the serial was to have been Anne Hardinge who had handled Attack of the Cybermen

④ Rehearsal sessions for studio began on Friday 16 May and Friday 30 May at Room 302 at Acton. The atmosphere in rehearsals was a lot of fun; Brian Blessed kept the cast entertained with many anecdotes from his career. However, the guest actors started to play their parts in a stylized manner; Martin was concerned by this, particularly when Colin Baker joined in, and felt that this turned his script into a send-up. In studio, Nabil Shaban was accompanied by an assistant in the form of Harry Taton

⑤ Sunday 15 June 1986: The cover of the OB schedule had a cartoon of three Daleks saying "He even offered me a marsh minnow!" – "Cheeky Sod" and "Well, I Love marsh minnows". Shooting at Telcombe Cliffs was done with the co-operation of the Southern Water Authority's Brighton Treatment Works

⑥ After a gallery only session on Wednesday 18 June 1986, editing took place from Saturday 21 June to Saturday 5 July; the episodes were dubbed on Sunday 20 July, Wednesday 6 August, Wednesday 20 August and Wednesday 3 September

⑦ Richard Hartley was engaged to provide the music score on Thursday 29 May 1986

⑧ In the Extras section, a number of clarifications/corrections are now possible. Ken Pritchard played a Time Lord while Peter Gates-Fleming was a Guard. Steve Sparling was Time Lord's Clerk. Lewis St Juste. Desmond Williams, Tony Amechi, James Dublin, Jackie Robinson and Eugene Paul were Guards. James Dublin was a Beor. Belinda Lee, Jacqueline Noble were Servants. Veronique Chomillo Edwards and Shalimar Bowers were Lab Assistants. Deep Roy was Alien (Passic Delegate) and a Mentor. Johnny Clayton was Vern. Ernest Jennings was Ulnnd. Steve Sparling, Joe Santo, David Rogie, Edward Rum Fitt, Wendy Millward, Mike Mungarven, Roy Brent, Kevin O'Brien, Dale Warren, Lorence Ferdinand, Ronnie King, Alan Warner, Gavin Roebuck, Harjit Singh, Stewart Myers, Ranjit Nakara, Save Dhalivaal, Eddie Nedari, Shara Balu Chokshi, Marisa Benlock, Tom Jennings and Ghitta Santana were Alphons. Tony Fray was a Mentor. Dave Cooper was Huge Alphons. In the Credits section, John Collins was an uncredited Production Associate who supervised the second recording block; the first block and the OB material was supervised by Angela Smith



The Trial of a Time Lord:

Parts Nine to Twelve

You Keep Me Hangin' On **BY GARY RUSSELL**



#One of these Mogarians is not like the others,
one of these Mogarians just isn't the same ...# 0 BBC

tantly, get stabbed with deadly thorn things for their troubles.

Of course, the real stars of this story aren't the villains (look, ma, two alien races, very different but both rather intriguing and well-drawn) or indeed our heroes (sorry, but drawing attention to Uncle Colin's inflated girth is not the way to make us like Mel, you know). No, it's Janet.

Janet the Stewardess. Top bird, gay icon, nice tits and all round superstar. Probably would've been played by Kylie if it'd been made five years later. She helps the Doctor, she helps the Professor, she helps the Commodore and even sweet old Mister Kimber gets her ministrations now and again. But she's a devil-woman, I tell you! A devil woman!

Get your video out and whizz to the sequence where the Time Lords, unlike the rest of us, fail to spot how the Doctor knew the Mogarian wasn't a Mogarian at all but a man called Hallett pretending to be a man called Grenville but dressed as a Mogarian called Enzu. Got there yet? Okay, now watch the background action. With hindsight, we know that the shifty bloke off Brookside is one of the bad guys – he has bad hair and an ill-fitting brown costume. Just as he turns away, Janet drops something into the glass of water that later poisons the Mogarian who isn't a Mogarian at all but a man called Hallett pretending to be a man called Grenville but dressed as a Mogarian called Enzu.

'It's her, Doctor!' I yelled at my TV screen in 1986, much to the alarm of my fellow viewers, Nick Briggs (who was bored), Bill Baggs (who was, I think, at that moment working out how to be in another country next week rather than sit through Doctor Who with me again) and John Ainsworth (who woke up). Another mate called Nick phoned up later that night, convinced it was Rudge, but I tried to convince him it was Janet. He was right, apparently, and Janet lived to fight another day.

But I tell you, she's a devil in disguise that one ... she was the mastermind behind Rudge, behind Lasky and probably tricked Ruth Baxter into eating demeter seeds (or whatever she did). And one day, we'll find out where she is now, and expose her Roger Cook-style!

You know, I think this was the last time I actually got excited about who the villain might turn out to be in Doctor Who ...



DWM ARCHIVE
DWM 323

COMMISSIONING

Thu 6 Mar 86 The Ultimate For
storyline commissioned
Thu 13 Mar 86 The Ultimate For
scripts commissioned; delivered
Sun 6 Apr 86 (Parts One and Two)
and **Fri 9 May 86** (Parts Three
and Four)

PRODUCTION

Wed 16 Jul 86 Television Centre
Studio 1: Trial Room
Wed 30 Jul 86 Television Centre
Studio 3: Grenville's Cabin;
Gymnasium; Gym Observation
Cubicle; Bulkhead/Air Duct
Thu 31 Jul 86 Television Centre
Studio 3: Bulkhead/Air Duct;
Control Room of Doctor's TARDIS;
Elderly Passenger's Cabin; Elderly
Passenger's Bathroom;
Hydroponic Centre; Work Hut;
Dolan's Cabin; Cargo Hold
Fri 1 Aug 86 Television Centre
Studio 3: Cargo Hold; Hydro-ponic
Centre; Work Hut
Tue 12 Aug 86 Television Centre
Studio 3: Janet's Cabin; Janet's
Bathroom; Lounge
Wed 13 Aug 86 Television Centre
Studio 3: Lounge; Bridge/Bridge
Lobby; Air Duct
Thu 14 Aug 86 Television Centre
Studio 3: Corridor; Waste Disposal
Unit; Communications Room;
Isolation Cabin

RADIO TIMES

Sat 1 Nov 86 Part Nine: At last
the Doctor is able to present his
evidence. It takes place in the
future with a new companion and
new problems.

Sat 8 Nov 86 Part Ten: As the
Hyperion III continues its journey,
more mysterious deaths occur.

Sat 15 Nov 86 Part Eleven: On
board the space-liner Hyperion III,
a murderer is at work. The Doctor
and Melanie intend to discover the
culprit, but who is the mutant
lodged in the isolation room?

Sat 22 Nov 86 Part Twelve: The
Hyperion III is heading straight
towards the Black Hole of
Tartarus. How can the space liner
and its passengers avoid disaster?

Dammit Janet: the Doctor
confronts the evil mastermind
behind the whole Hyperion III
scam. Possibly. 0 BBC

I'm terribly fond of Pip and Jane Baker stories. There. Said it. Out of the closet and into the world at large. I heart P&J!

Thus, when two of my faves collided (P&J and Agatha Christie), what more could I have wanted? I mean, start with the best, why don't you? If you're going to do Christie in Doctor Who, you re-work *Murder on the Orient Express* (if you've not seen the various movie versions – the Albert Finney one is terribly good, you know – or, heaven forbid, not read the novel, move onto Mister Gillart's appraisal of Parts Thirteen and Fourteen and come back here once you've educated yourself).

Thus it transpires that we have a luxury mode of transport, reasonably claustrophobic, in which someone gets murdered and the Doctor/Poirot has to work out whodunit. Trouble is of course, they all did it. Conveniently for Monsieur Finney, he had 13 suspects ready to take the blame for 13 stab wounds to poor old Richard Widmark. Monsieur Baker has about 13 bodies and a variety of different modes of death but the basic fact remains, they all did it to each other – the wretched Vervoids only got to start bumping people off towards the end, as if to remind them, and us, 'Hey we're the stars here, we can kill people just as well as you, you know!'. Of course, bearing in mind that the best they can manage for the first few parts is a doddery pensioner and a mutated immobile woman in a box, it's no surprise that dippy Security Chief Rudge thought up more ingenious ways (poison, oxygen in a glass of water, etc). You can almost see the delight with which a Vervoid (I hope he was played by the deliciously named Peppi Borza) chucks a man in shiny clothing into a smoky waste disposal crusher, as if to say 'Hal at last, you weak, pathetic humans can see the real vegetable terror that is the Vervoids! Bwa hahahahaha' only to realise he's bumped off his solitary observer. Oh well, back to the compost heap for him, then. Sadly neither Dimmock nor Titchmarsh were around to give the Hyperion III the customary make-over or, more impor-

The Trial of a Time Lord:

Parts Thirteen and Fourteen

Every Loser Wins **BY GARY GILLATT**

DWM ARCHIVE

DWM Winter Special 1992

COMMISSIONING

Tue 4 Feb 86 Time Inc. scripts commissioned from Robert Holmes for Fri 28 Feb 86
Fri 6 Jun 86 Serial 7C Episode 14 script commissioned from Pip and Jane Baker; delivered Sun 15 Jun 86

PRODUCTION

Mon 23 – Tue 24 Jun 86 Camber Sands, Camber, E Sussex (Beach)
Mon 30 Jun 86 Gladstone Pottery Museum, Longton, Staffs (First Clerk's Office; Victorian Alley; Second Clerk's Office; Potbank Yard; Balcony of Factory)
Tue 1 Jul 86 Gladstone Pottery Museum (Potbank Yard; First Clerk's Office; Second Clerk's Office)
Wed 2 Jul 86 Gladstone Pottery Museum (Engine Room; Potbank Yard; Dead End; Alleyway; Passageway)
Thu 3 Jul 86 Gladstone Pottery Museum (Engine Room; Potbank Yard)
Fri 4 Jul 86 Gladstone Pottery Museum (Standby day)
Wed 16 Jul 86 Television Centre Studio 1: Control Room of Master's TARDIS; Master's TARDIS Corridor
Thu 17 Jul 86 Television Centre Studio 1: Trial Room; Corridor

RADIO TIMES

Sat 29 Nov 86 Part Thirteen: The Doctor's evidence is complete and he has been charged with genocide. Can friends from



The BBC's new hairstyling machines weren't as gentle as Colin had been led to believe ... © BBC

a delicate and functional structure couldn't have come about purely by chance.

I still have a shadow of that feeling while watching *The Ultimate Fo* (or whatever you decide it's called). You see, with most other *Doctor Who* you can clearly understand how it came to be the way it is. Be it shaped by the whimsical Whitaker, the horror-hunting Holmes, or the comics-loving Cartmel, you can discern a straight line from inspiration, through design, to realisation. But you watch the crazy mess of ideas that is *The Ultimate Fo*, and the mind can only boggle over how it came to exist at all.

As fans, we are blessed with certain insights into the production process. We know that Robert Holmes died with only the first of these two episodes committed to paper. We know that Pip and Jane Baker had to dash off the second in the manner of some bizarre game of 'Consequences', extrapolating as best they could from what Holmes had already written. We also know that the only person who might have smoothed the join, script editor Eric Seward, had already stormed from the production, leaving behind only his signed copy of *The TARDIS Inside Out* and a poisonous interview in *Starburst* magazine.

However, despite the circumstances of its production, the climax of *The Trial of a Time Lord* remains an absolute joy. The evidence for the defence? Well, exhibit 'A' is the sublime dialogue: "You're elevating futility to a high art. There's nothing you can do to prevent the catharsis of spurious morality!" or "I've thrown a pebble into the water and killed two birds with one stone!" Exhibit 'B' is the majestic plotting: this is, after all, a story whose climax involves the Doctor's companion racing to tell some Time Lords to turn the telly off. Exhibit 'C' is the single most impressively gay thing ever in the history of *Doctor Who*: that final shot of Peri Brown and King Vranos framed in a big, pink heart.

And so although it appears, by all accounts, that no-one involved in the making of these episodes had a clue what was going on, they still managed to produce something sublime, majestic, and totally impossible. And if it wasn't their doing, we can only sensibly conclude that there must be a far more grand design at work.

So completely divine, *The Ultimate Fo* is almost enough to make you believe in God.

Down the ages, many philosophers have attempted to prove the existence of God. One traditional method is the 'argument from design'. This points out that if we look at any complex system in everyday life – such as predictive texting on a Nokia mobile phone, or ticket booking on Trainline.com – we would reasonably assume that that it could not have come about by mere chance, and that it had been designed. Now if we look at the universe as a whole, surely such an ineffably intricate mechanism – from the orbits of the planets around the sun to the precise ratio of alcohol consumption to sick days from work – must in itself have been designed, and that designer must be God.

It's a persuasive argument. Even though a confirmed atheist, I remember sitting in second year biology, poking at the innards of a sheep's eyeball with a scalpel, teasing ciliary fibres from some vitreous humour, and thinking that such

ARCHIVE EXTRA

➔ After Eric Seward had submitted a script for Part Fourteen in accordance with the outline discussed with Robert Holmes, John Nathan-Turner asked for various changes to be made. Seward submitted a revised version (which included a scene about going round in circles which had been his camera test piece for Bonnie Langford), but this was still not what the producer really wanted, particularly regarding the ending. Nathan-Turner was unhappy with the inconclusive finale, and did not like the idea of wasting a regeneration of the Doctor's on the Valeyard. Seward had problems with the changes Nathan-Turner wanted; he later heard that Nathan-Turner

had said he would rewrite the material anyway if necessary. With stalemate reached, Seward withdrew his script; all copies of this were then shredded by the production office

➔ Anthony Ainley was engaged on the episodes on Tuesday 1 April 1986; Tony Selby's contract as Glitz was extended to cover these episodes on Wednesday 30 April

➔ Pip and Jane Baker were contacted by Nathan-Turner on Wednesday 4 June and informed that Holmes' Part Thirteen was being sent to them by taxi and for them to meet the producer at the BBC next morning.

When outlining requirements for Pip and Jane Baker to prepare a new final episode, a legal representative was present with Nathan-Turner and his team to ensure that they were not informed of any of the content of Seward's script. Nathan-Turner indicated that he wanted an upbeat ending, that the issue of the Valeyard faking the Doctor's evidence should be tackled head-on, and that some material should be written to confirm that Peri was not dead. The Bakers decided that they wanted to conclude the story with the Trial Room being blown up because they hated using the set in their Vervoid scripts. Nathan-Turner needed an outline



Never mind the Penelope Pitsoth histrionics! The Doc's honest, truthful and boring new assistant, Melanie. © BBC

within three days and then a script within ten days

● In the script for Part Fourteen, the Valeyard quotes and the Doctor correctly identifies the "undiscovered country" speech about death from Act Three, Scene One of William Shakespeare's *Hamlet* which was first performed in 1603. Later, as the Doctor awaits his fake execution, he quotes Sydney Carton's words as he awaits execution from Charles Dickens's 1859 novel *A Tale of Two Cities*; Michael Jayston accused the Bakers of misquoting the work in the script. Part Thirteen referred to famous liars such as the devilled biblical liar Ananias (from Book of Acts Chapter 5) and the eighteenth century German soldier Baron von Munchhausen. Worked in at the start of the script was a reuse of the expensive 35mm model shot of the TARDIS being drawn into the Space Station which appeared in Part One, but now with the pods carrying Mel and Glitz replacing the TARDIS. In Part Fourteen, the opening scene was to have the Valeyard's face appearing in mid-air like the Cheshire Cat in *Alice in Wonderland*, and the end of the script was to have the Valeyard laughing

● Monday 23 June 1986: The arms pulling the Doctor down into the beach belonged to visual effects assistants Chris Reynolds, John Van Der Pool and Clare Chopping who stood under a rubber membrane covered with chippings; Baker lay on a platform which was on a hydraulic lift and was lowered into one of the two chambers in a six foot deep pit dug on the beach at Camber. Baker had to force his head under and needed three takes to get this right. The cat badges worn by Baker for Serial 7C were based on his own cats Eric and Weeble and sculpted by Maggie Howard of Maggie's Moggies

● Tuesday 24 June 1986: The beach hut which near the Camber Harbour Office which it had been arranged would be the Master's TARDIS was found to be locked on recording, meaning that the BBC crew had to break in to get the shot they needed. On Thursday 10 July, the BBC then heard from the real owner of the hut about the damage to his property ...

● Monday 30 June 1986: Bonnie Langford was very nervous for her first recordings as Mel, mainly because she was worried that her character was ill-defined. The actress was given two distinct looks for the production of Serial 7C to distinguish the future Mel of the final two episodes from the Mel seen in the Vervoid segment

● Wednesday 2 July 1986: The mask of Popplewick removed from the Valeyard's face had been made in latex over a cast taken from Jayston's face

● With OB recording at Stoke happening generally in the evenings, the cast were able to enjoy days out to Alton Towers and the Garden Festival in Stoke

● Studio rehearsals began on Monday 7 June 1986. Actor James Bree, playing the Keeper of the Matrix, was disappointed when his role in the original Part Fourteen was diminished in the new version prepared by the Bakers

● Studio recording ran from 7:30pm to 10pm on each evening with a session from

2.30pm to 6.00pm on the afternoon of Thursday 17 July

● Thursday 17 July 1986: Studio recording was covered by a photographer for a poster issued by the BBC Schools programme *Zig Zag* about "the making of a BBC Television programme" which was available from November. The clip of the Vervoids dying as seen in Part Fourteen was to be inserted later since the Vervoid narrative had not yet been recorded

● Monday 17 November 1986: Brian Blessed and Nicola Bryant were paid a fee for the clip showing them used in the final show

● Dominic Glynn was commissioned to provide the music score on Thursday 31 July 1986

● An Audience Research Report on the season was issued on Monday 23 March 1987, based on the comments of 434 viewers. The general appreciation scores, although up on the 1985 season, were lower than the average for UK drama programmes, and the share of the reporting panel who watched the series was down by a third on the previous year. The report stated clearly that "The Doctor's new assistant, Melanie ... was not popular with reporting viewers", and her statistical rating was far behind that of Peri. Although Baker's ratings as the Doctor were very good, one comment was that "This Doctor Who is not the best portrayal of the character"

● The episodes were shown in New Zealand in January 1990. A Fine Art Castings model of the Inquisitor was released in 1987, and a commemorative plate was also available from Gladstone Pottery the same year. The incidental score for these episodes was issued on cassette in Summer 1988 by Domnitemporal Services Ltd on Block Light - The Doctor Who Music of Dominic Glynn. Sound effects of the Tissue Compression Eliminator and the Limbo Atrophier for the episodes were included on the BBC CD *Doctor Who: 30 Years of the Radiophonic Workshop* in July 1993. BBC Enterprises issued the episodes on videotape in October 1993 - under the title *The Ultimate Foe* - in the special TARDIS tin comprising the whole of *The Trial of a Time Lord*. UK Gold screened the episodes in



November 1994 and as a 50-minute compilation from December 1996, sometimes billed as *The Ultimate Foe*. The whole season aired in Germany on VOX in 1995 as *Dos Uteit* (*The Sentence*). Part Fourteen was shown as part of *The Take: 35 Years of Doctor Who* in November 1998 and repeated the following year

● In addition to the broadcast versions, the BBC retain a first edit of Part Thirteen (duration: 26'27"), the first, second and fourth edits of Part Fourteen (durations: 30'33", 30'21" and 27'06") as well as a studio recording spool for each instalment

● In the Extras section, further identification is now possible. Kenneth Thomas, David Bache, Leslie Fry, James Delaney and Roy Seeley were *Crimson Time Lords*; Derek Hunt, David Fieldsend, Lew Hooper, David Enyon and Llewellyn Williams were *Orange Time Lords*; John Buckmaster, Jack Horton, Martin Clark, Bob Hargreaves and Barry Butler were *Brown Time Lords*

Sabalom Glitz (Tony Selby) and the Doctor (Colin Baker) find themselves in the fantasy world of the Matrix. © BBC

➤ his past and future aid the Doctor's cause?

Sat 6 Dec 86 Part Fourteen: The Doctor and the Valeyard have entered the world of the Matrix. Can the Doctor defeat the evil incarnation of himself?

The Valeyard (Michael Jayston) plots to free himself from the Doctor's misguided maxims. It says here. © BBC



Further Adventures

Audios

His audio adventures have topped the DWM poll two years running ... and now so has he!
So what's behind this reversal of fortunes for Colin Baker's Doctor? What's turned him from zero to hero? Dave Owen dons his headphones and attempts to find the answer ...

As his predecessor might have observed, the Sixth Doctor had rather an undistinguished innings on television. But could his environment have been any less hostile?

With formless 45-minute episodes, an all-too-publicised hiatus, fewer episodes than before, and of course, that costume, any other circumstance would be an improvement – and appearing on audio undeniably is. Although print might have begun this incarnation's rehabilitation – toning down his more clashing shades and, crucially, providing a more diverse pool of stories – sound has elevated his reputation to at least match his peers'. Eighteen years after his debut, the Sixth Doctor has finally fulfilled his potential. So, what makes today's version so different from 1984's?

Could it be the aforementioned environment? Picture another Doctor in any of Colin Baker's TV stories. Then imagine your favourite story with the Sixth Doctor (we may assume, reasonably safely, that it doesn't already feature him). You see? A deliberately fractious companion relationship, melodramatic dialogue, and an uncomfortable overlap of the absurdly theatrical and brutally cruel don't make a flattering back-

reign, as in 1985, BBC Radio 4's *Slipback* attempted vainly to bridge the 18-month hiatus between seasons. Despite its pedigree – starring both the series' then-current leads, and penned by its script editor – it is as unlike the experience of watching *Doctor Who* on telly as one can imagine. Coming across as a poor man's *Hitchhiker's Guide To The Galaxy*, complete with neurotic computer, eternally-bathing captain and jobsworth cops, its ten-minute chunks are hard to follow or visualise, no matter how entertainingly eccentric the characters are. Swap around a couple of the middle episodes, and you'd be none the wiser.

For Big Finish, the Sixth Doctor has enjoyed the luxury denied his predecessor of appearing with all

as they quickly become involved in a storyline set entirely within one building and featuring an enemy of pure sound, such echoes of the past are displaced by a script which not only embraces *Doctor Who*'s new medium, but takes it as its inspiration. It's a dignified, stylish production biding well for the future.

In ...ish the Doctor and Peri are frequently separated, and too otherwise occupied to bicker. In addition, the pace of ideas is so frantic that there is no time for the Doctor to sulk like a hermit, or for Peri to have to avoid the embrace of a lecherous villain. No other incarnation could fit so well into this complicated tale of words and their significance, since he's always been a compulsive philologist, with a delivery that boldly emphasises key words, as if explaining to a dense associate how he

has cracked a cryptic crossword clue. Releasing a listener-unfriendly story like this, Big Finish is taking advantage of the cataloguing instincts of *Doctor Who* fans in general, and their subscriber base in particular. What they purchase represents a challenge, rather than a comfort. It's the equivalent of the BBC foisting a thought-provoking *Play For Today* on license-payers in the age before today's multi-channel mediocrity. When the Sixth Doctor appears



BIG MOUTH STRIKES AGAIN

drop for any protagonist. For all the boldness of approach in depicting a Doctor who was alien, distant, and aloof, he was unlikely to flourish in such an unsupportive setting. Perhaps deliberately hard to warm to, his whereabouts increased the risk that one might simply not bother.

And that is the risk that this incarnation could not afford to take. In order to be fascinating rather than unliveable, his audience has to want to like him. As long as he stays on the right side of being difficult, then there will be a stimulating conflict between the character and his audience. When he strays over this line, he's lost them. And he did.

When the ersatz continuity announcement at the start of *Whispers of Terror* says "And now it's the welcome return of Colin Baker, in *Doctor Who*" he's being a little disingenuous, not to say optimistic. For his previous audio appearances had done little to suggest that the medium itself would work miracles on his Doctor. Uniquely, this incarnation appeared in radio episodes during his television

(well, alright, both) of his TV travelling companions. Not only that, but with the series clearly indicating that he travelled without either for a while, no contrivance is needed to introduce the untelevised Evelyn Smythe, and even comic strip sidekick Frobisher. Being one of the Doctors who were taken off air by the powers that be, at least reaps the benefit of lengthy unseen interregnums that other adventures can occupy. Big Finish is coy about which came first; the historian or the penguin, but for our purposes, it needn't really matter. Let's just assume, unless explicitly stated, that for all his audio companions, their adventures took place in release order.

For the Doctor, therefore, his first Big Finish adventure is *Whispers of Terror*. Little has changed about the Doctor, Peri, or their relationship since *Revelation of the Daleks*. They are mutually antagonistic, and the Doctor has recourse to repetitively yell, in crescendo, back at his companion whatever misapprehension he finds her guilty of. However,

in *The Sirens of Time*, he's traveling alone, and, without Peri to sneer at, is immediately more likeable. He has the manner of an only mildly condescending elderly academic, becoming heated only when this is justified by crises. And refreshingly, when these three Doctors meet, they accord one another civilized deference. The Sixth's dedicated episode sees him at a conference aboard a star liner heading for a space hazard, which authentically feels like *The Trial of a Time Lord* Parts Nine to Twelve, but does little to help rescue Big Finish's jittery first night.

The Ratings War was only available free with DWM 313, perhaps just as well, it being a 40-minute satire on contemporary television which depends totally on a previous interest in *Beep The Meep*, the fluffy star of DWM's early comic strips. It apes their style well, with an economically unaccompanied Doctor arriving in a 2000AD-style future world, which plays up real trends in commercial consumerism.

He's alone once again when he turns up in the middle of the *Exilis* trilogy, for *Exilis Rising*, a sedate piece with a high quota of verbal sparring and dissembling, both of which our man excels at. It's a bit po-faced after the whimsy of the trilogy's opener, but its quiet solemnity is its strength. This feels like a studied attempt to resurrect the television Sixth Doctor – he's overarticulate and a bit more affected than on other discs.

So, is there a new chemistry for the Sixth Doctor when he's with Peri or alone? No – it's a purer distillation perhaps, but no new compounds have formed. These only start to appear when he teams up with Frobisher, the penguin-shaped whifferrill from the DWM strip of the mid-1980s. The *Maltze Penguin* (given away free to Big Finish subscribers) is an out-and-out genre parody, picking up on the shapeshifter's day job as a Chanderlesque private eye. It's also extremely funny, and reveals a great talent for comedy in author Robert Sherman, Robert Jezek, deadpanning as Frobisher, and, amazingly, Colin Baker. The same Colin Baker, that is, who on television would use the blunt instrument of overemphasis to batter delicate humour to death with regularity. A high level of wit is also present in the same team's *The Holy Terror*. However, rather than being a mere genre send-up, this is a less specific form – something like big-screen Monty Python, with gruesome execution carried out with banal bureaucracy. Why is this high-contrast mix of darkness and light more successful here than the same televised combina-

man she would "prefer to think of as my companion". Their relationship more resembles that of husband and wife than the more usual family analogues aboard the TARDIS, possibly because each is strongly gender-polarised. He's headstrong, develops overnight fascinations, and is prone to sulk when not getting his own way – all unmistakably male traits. She, in turn, is thoughtful, takes an interest in other people, and philosophically puts up with boys' idiosyncrasies, as only a woman can. And, like a husband, the Doctor knows there's only so far he can go – he simply would not dream of being so cavalier with her as he would with Peri. So Evelyn directly makes the Doctor more likeable.

Evelyn arrives in *The Marian Conspiracy*, a so-called 'pure' historical story, if one overlooks the contaminant influence of time-travel on history itself. This Tudor succession drama is a little heavy-handed in places, with musical cues indicating when we're supposed to find certain nuances charming. Who knows, without them, they might have been. But, significantly, this is the first time one feels real warmth for the Sixth Doctor. The transformation has begun. It's an innocent tale that spurns the cynical way one could take time-travel for granted, and basks in the wonder a historian would feel if she could see the inside of a Tudor tavern first-hand.

Next, *The Spectre of Lanyon Moor* deposits a Doctor more used to purple-skied alien worlds, punishment domes or antiseptic citadels, into the moist

EVELYN SMYTHE IS PERHAPS THE FIRST COMPLETELY SUCCESSFUL COMPANION TO HAVE BEEN CREATED OUTSIDE OF TV

tion, as seen in such stories as *Attack of the Cybermen?* Maybe because it's a comedy that eventually becomes serious, rather than a grim drama with a hit-and-miss sprinkling of humour.

We keep observing improvements, so is the Sixth Doctor's audio reign simply a chance to set right what was wrong on TV? Superficially, yes. He gets properly structured quartets of 25-minute episodes as all the other Doctors did. He features strongly in all his stories from the outset, rather than taking half the time to arrive at the action. He gets a full adventure with the Brigadier, which tellingly includes an authors sleeve note bemoaning that this Doctor "never had a chance" to visit its archetypal Doctor Who setting. You can bet your bottom dollar that if his brief screen stint had omitted appearances by Daleks, Cybermen, or the Master, then they would have appeared with him on CD by now. It's as if the Sixth Doctor has seen the advert for Claims Direct and called to get his compensation. However, to accompany him between Peri and Mel, he gets someone who far exceeds what he might have expected in a longer television career ...

Doctor Evelyn Smythe is perhaps the first completely successful travelling companion to have been created for the Doctor outside the television series. The 55-year-old divorced history lecturer is sufficiently distinct from the commonly perceived norm for the role to be uniquely memorable, yet close enough to preconceptions about what someone from her background might be like to foster instant recognition. In her own right, she is immediately more interesting than Peri or Mel, but to appreciate her true value, look at the effect she has on the Doctor. She's slightly stern with him when rebuking him for disrupting her lecture, and her intellectual weight makes her at once more of an equal to the

present-day rural England of *Image of the Fendahl* or *The Stones of Blood*. With two people he respects on hand – Evelyn and the Brigadier – he's positively urbane. This socially mobile team fit in so well with the story's complement of aristocrats and archaeologists that a return to 'Somewhere in the South of England' must be on the cards soon. In these two stories, using the Sixth Doctor in situations frequented instead by his predecessors does him no harm at all.

That can't really be said for *The Apocalypse Element*, an incomprehensible melee of ideas that has the Daleks invading Gallifrey when it might as well be the Draivins invading Ganymede for all that either brings to the proceedings. Any Doctor could have dashed through this, and almost any companion could have saved the day through possessing a human retinal print. It's all horribly rushed, and wastes the potential of the Daleks, Gallifrey and the return of Lalla Ward's Romana. It's a garish cocktail in too small a glass, reminding us that less is often more.

Bloodtide and *Project: Twilight* mark a return to form, strengthened by their consecutive releases. Both emphasise the audio Sixth Doctor's new-found *joie-de-vivre*. Be it the work of Herman Melville, or the menu at his favourite Chinese take-away, he finds much to celebrate. Compare the atmosphere as the Doctor and Peri arrive in *The Mark of the Kani* – he correcting her grammar, she clearly not wanting to be there – with the Doctor and Evelyn's arrival in the Galapagos Islands in *Bloodtide*, together revelling in their tortuous tortoise puns. They're happy – that's the big difference. It's hard to imagine a Silurian story that isn't essentially summarised as "some Silurians are awakened and decide to wipe out humanity and reclaim the world", but this one adds new complications. Its local colour – the South Seas, a young Darwin – couldn't be bettered, while the line, "I am



CHANGE YOUR MIND

Jellies and penguins and imps – oh my! The Sixth Doctor's audio adventures in a nutshell ...

SLIPBACK

Written by Erik Saward
Set Between Revelation of the Daleks and The Trial of a Time Lord
A neurotic computer and an infectious space captain give a hungover Doctor a headache

WHISPERS OF TERROR

Written by Justin Richards
Set Between Revelation of the Daleks and The Trial of a Time Lord
The Museum of Aural Antiquities plays host to a conspiracy and a creature of pure sound

THE MARIAN CONSPIRACY

Written by Jacqueline Rayner
Set Between The Trial of a Time Lord and Time and The Rani

The Doctor acquires a new companion, Dr Evelyn Smythe, and ends up in the Tower as Tudor history starts to unravel

THE SPECTRE OF LANYON MOOR

Written by Nicholas Pegg
Set Between The Trial of a Time Lord and Time and The Rani
Megalithic remains in present-day Cornwall draw the Doctor into a plot that requires the assistance of the Brigadier to solve

THE APOCALYPSE ELEMENT

Written by Stephen Cole
Set Between The Trial of a Time Lord and Time and The Rani
The Daleks invade Gallifrey, and the Doctor is reunited with Romana



THE HOLY TERROR

Written by Robert Shearman
Set Between The World Shapers and The Age of Chaos
An anomalous castle, peopled with fundamentalists who worship Frobisher, holds a dark secret

BLOODTIDE

Written by Jonathan Morris
Set Between The Trial of a Time Lord

and Time and The Rani
On the Galapagos Islands in the nineteenth century, Charles Darwin encounters the Silurians

PROJECT: TWILIGHT

Written by Cavan Scott and Mark Wright
Set Between The Trial of a Time Lord and Time and The Rani
In present-day gangland London, the Doctor gets it in the neck as he encounters a sinister organisation known as The Forge

THE ONE DOCTOR

Written by Gareth Roberts and Clayton Hickman
Set Between The Trial of a Time Lord and Time and The Rani
In the far future, Banto Zame proves to the Doctor that imitation is not always the sincerest form of flattery

EXCELSIS RISING

Written by David A. Macinnis
Set Between The Trial of a Time Lord and Time and The Rani

The Doctor returns to an industrialised planet Artaris to find Lord Grayvorn back in authority

THE MALTESE PENGUIN

Written by Robert Shearman
Set Between The World Shapers and The Holy Terror
On the mean streets, gumshoe Frobisher encounters a dame who seems strangely unfamiliar

...ISH

Written by Philip Pascoe
Set Between Revelation of the Daleks and The Trial of a Time Lord
At a lexicographers' conference in the future, it becomes apparent that in the beginning was the word

REAL TIME

Written by Gary Russell
Set Between The Trial of a Time Lord and Time and The Rani
Waiting at the end of time, the Cyber Controller has laid a trap for the humans who find him ...

your God" makes for one of Big Finish's finest episode endings.

Project: Twilight mixes disparate ingredients altogether more successfully than The Apocalypse Element. That a mobster casino in Bernemondsey might be the front for a cell of vampires is yet another example of Doctor Who's engaging juxtaposition of the fantastic and the mundane. It also exploits the series' established vampire mythos without depending on it, simultaneously exercising

past the stigma of her appearing in arguably the series' worst two seasons, and you'll find much potential in Mel. She's perhaps not as enriching an influence on the Doctor as Evelyn, but something about her, even if it's only her sunnier disposition, stops him sniping at her as he does Peri. Langford's ability to shift the thickness of Mel's characterisation between someone simply saccharine sweet and relentlessly cheerful, and someone who is well aware of these attributes, makes her the only

grand, over-the-top characterisation, bluster and pomp giving way to earthier indignation – as famously practiced by Frankie Howerd, or closer to home, Peter Butterworth – that fuels The One Doctor. But it's not merely a huffing blustery romp – all the other elements of a good Christmas pantomime are present. Just as such pantos are supposedly set in the middle ages or the Far East, yet are sprinkled with anachronistic references, so The Wakeset Link and the Smash robots enrich this. More importantly, when Christopher Biggins' imposter Doctor contemptuously dismisses the victims of one of his frauds as "a right bunch of Quarks", one witnesses a franchise mature enough to look at itself and laugh. Big Finish's finest hook? For sheer entertainment, oh yes it is.

THE SIXTH DOCTOR IS NOW FINALLY APPEARING IN STORIES BY AUTHORS WHO ARE KEEN TO ENGAGE WITH HIM

the rough vocabulary of The Sweeney or Gangsters. The important quality here is balance. Big Finish is better equipped to provide artistic equilibrium than BBC television was; able to switch leading characters each month, but also, even within individual stories, not exclusively embracing a single genre.

The Doctor/Evelyn team reached a much wider audience by featuring in Real Time, the multimedia online adventure on the BBCi website. It's not by any stretch Big Finish's finest outing for this incarnation, but it would perhaps be fairer to compare it with his only previous broadcast offering in six short episodes, Slipback. Real Time is unquestionably the more accessible, even if its verbally related time-travel plot is bewildering. And Slipback lacks any line as unintentionally amusing as "I've never seen a script like it". Monster stories are not immediately a good idea on audio (Land of the Dead, for example needed to strain to have a character give a verbal description of the threat to hand), and it's essential that the monsters are articulate enough to converse, and preferably not just with each other. After Attack of the Cybermen, televised Doctor Who shied away from addressing where new Cybermen come from, resulting in two insipid subsequent appearances, so Real Time can at least be applauded for reminding us just why they're so scary.

It's perhaps odd that the Sixth Doctor has shared only one audio outing with Mel, since it's implied in her appearances on TV that she has had two travelling stints with the Doctor, each presumably comprising numerous unseen adventures. Get



choice to accompany the Doctor in The One Doctor.

The One Doctor is a comedy. That is to say, it was deliberately written, in advance, as a comedy. With comic characters, comic situations, and jokes that are planned, set up and delivered. This differs from the humour of the TV Sixth Doctor, because that seemingly consisted of minuscule last-minute additions, such as the Doctor pointing "this way" and then going another (ouch, my aching sides!). There's one moment that was conceivably intentionally scripted to be as funny as it was, and that's one of The Two Doctors' eponymous leads sprouting red eyebrows and spots as he strolls into Seville for dinner in top hat and tails. And it's that kind of

It seems there are three distinct types of Sixth Doctor audio adventures now. A minority feature him with Peri, and depict a character dangerously close to his TV incarnation. There are comedies, which exploit Colin Baker's ability to play for laughs – often dead straight. And then there are the continuing adventures of the Doctor and Evelyn, which prove that Doctor Six isn't really so different from his previous or subsequent selves, and that his masculine arrogance, if channeled productively can create an intelligent, eccentric character, rather like a university tutor who takes a few terms to drop his guard and really enjoy the company of his students.

Now, in 2002, Colin Baker is winning "Best Actor" in the DWM poll and one finds oneself eagerly looking forward to each of his new audio adventures. So, what has made this incarnation, who was consistently voted least favourite, turn the poll on its head? Has his character changed? Well, no, not really. Certainly less than the First Doctor's character mellowed, or the Fourth's became more self-indulgent. Much of his unattractive bipolar disorder had dissipated by his second season, and with Mel at his side, he had become a far more likeable proposition. So if the character hasn't changed that significantly, what has? For a start, he's surrounded by company that brings out the best in him, but most importantly, he's appearing in good stories, by writers keen to engage with the character.

It really is that simple. The Sixth Doctor has finally been given a chance ...

FURTHER ADVENTURES BOOKS

Matt Michael flicks back through eight years of the Sixth Doctor's exploits on the printed page, and finds that this is where the character's rehabilitation in the eyes of fandom really began ...

Time and the Rani begins with a cliffhanger. The Sixth Doctor, whom we last glimpsed leaving a Time Lord court in triumph with a companion from his future, lies prone on the floor. As a monstrous hairy hand turns over his body, a swirl of light obscures his features. Seconds later, an entirely new Doctor is before us leaving a string of unanswered questions. How did the Doctor meet Mel? Did he manage to avert the Valeyard's creation? In *Time and the Rani*, we learn that the new Doctor is 953 years old. At his trial, the Doctor was only 900. What happened in those intervening fifty-odd years? These are just the sort of questions that the books and audios are in a position to answer ...

More than any of the other 'past Doctors', the Sixth has scope for development, a potential to achieve the sort of literary regeneration that the Seventh and Eighth Doctors have experienced in their *New Adventures*. With a mere eight television stories, and, more importantly, an open-ended final appearance ("Carrot juice, carrot juice, carrot juice!" may be a less elegiac parting shot than the "Somewhere out there ..." speech from *Survival*, but it's just as inconclusive), the post-Trial novels aren't so much plugging a gap between TV serials as filling a gaping chasm in the series' history. Add to this the fact that the Sixth Doctor's personality was widely seen as flawed and in dire need of fleshing

However, to characterise the Sixth Doctor as an amoral bully would be to ignore his considerable charm, the compassion he shows to Azmael and (too late) to Lytton, and his childlike and very Doctorish curiosity. At his best, this Doctor is an outspoken opponent of tyranny and injustice, a tireless crusader against evil. If his zeal and enthusiasm sometimes manifest themselves as arrogance and physical action, and if some have to be sacrificed for the greater good, then so be it.

The Sixth Doctor's further adventures started early: long before Virgin published *State of Change*, there had been a number of Sixth Doctor novels that had never appeared in any other format. A cover flash singled out these "Missing Stories" – the Season Twenty-Three adventures that never were – as something different from the usual Target output. Had they been released five years later, there is no doubt that they would have been branded as *Missing Adventures*, just as the untelevised *Time's Crucible* and *Lungbarrow* were issued as *New Adventures* for the Seventh Doctor. Those who are so inclined can imagine that the Doctor finally managed to finish what he was saying at the end of *Revelation* of the Daleks and took Pert to Blackpool. Those who, probably wisely, would rather forget the "Missing Stories" can pretend he was going to say "I'll take you to Ravolox". Unfortunately, the alternative Season Twenty-Three would not have improved Colin's reputation. It makes most of the

HOLDING OUT FOR A HERO

out, and you have a Doctor. What author's fantasy: the chance to have a regular character genuinely develop without the need to tie any changes into an existing television story.

Criticisms of the Sixth Doctor's era tend to focus on three areas: increased violence, an over-use of continuity, and the unsympathetic nature of the Doctor himself. In many ways, the Sixth Doctor we saw on television was defined by his very first scene at the end of *The Caves of Androzani*. Showing a blatant disregard for the wellbeing of his companion, the first thing this new Doctor does is check his hands to make sure that the spectrox toxæmia blisters have vanished. In *The Twin Dilemma*, the Doctor is suffering from post-regeneration trauma that makes him moody, unpredictable and dangerous. Unfortunately, some of the writers of Season Twenty-Two seemed to forget that this period of instability was supposed to be temporary, and instead concentrated on making the character snappy and generally unpleasant to his companion, as well as a large proportion of the people he met on his travels.

same mistakes as Season Twenty-Two: too much senseless violence, and a numbing and unnecessary reliance on the show's past. Worse, it would have been boring. *The Nightmare Fair* is a location-based romp meant to evoke fond memories of *City of Death*, but to compare the two is to compare the Eiffel Tower to the Blackpool Tower: one is a spectacular masterpiece and the other is a tacky imitation meant to please people who haven't seen the real thing. It's certainly not a patch on anything Graham Williams produced for the previous Baker. As a vehicle for Sil's return, *Mission to Magnus* doesn't come close to *Mindwarp*, and the pointless inclusion of both the Ice Warriors and yet another renegade from the class of '63 is unpleasantly reminiscent of *The Two Doctors* and *The Mark of the Rani* – too much continuity and too many villains. The *Ultimate Evil*, meanwhile, is simply awful. It's as if Wally K Daly watched Season Twenty-Two and



decided that it wasn't violent enough. There are scenes of the Doctor attacking people with shards of glass, and Peri being brutally stoned, all tied into some absurd plot to use balls that advertise holidays to spy on Gallifrey. Maybe it wasn't just Peri who was stoned. In both *The Ultimate Evil* and *Mission to Magnus*, bad Star Trek sci-fi ideas abound. The former features a love/hate may gun that can be blocked by a special helmet. The latter revolves around that hokiest of clichés, the planet of the women. Had these stories ever made it to the screen, we'd have a season that would make *The Trial of a Time Lord* seem like a majestic epic.

Fortunately, Virgin and BBC Books have been much kinder to the Sixth Doctor. What the *Missing Adventures* authors have done is to focus more on the Doctor's positive characteristics than the negative. They have found reasons to explain his occasional lapses, from suggesting that he suffers from emotional repression caused by the circumstances of his last regeneration to his exasperation at Peri's lack of appreciation for the wonders of the universe. They have allowed him to show a softer side – witness his heartfelt apology to Peri in *Burning Heart*, and his compassion for the energy being Iam in *State of Change*. Most interestingly, a number of the authors have suggested that following the revelation of the Valeyard's true nature – a twisted future incarnation of our hero – the Doctor seeks to change his ways, and to refrain from the violence and arrogance that he believes may bring the Valeyard into being. This fear of becoming the Valeyard is a theme that links the post-Trial novels. Steve Lyon's *Time of Your Life*, which is set immediately after the trial, sees the Doctor retiring to become a hermit and

seen in several *New Adventures*: that the Seventh Doctor somehow engineered his previous incarnation's demise because a Sixth Doctor crippled by the fear of becoming the Valeyard was not able to take the actions required to become Time's Champion. Paul Cornell first suggested the idea in *Love and War*, and it was eagerly seized on by other writers. *Head Games*, again by Steve Lyons, implies that the Seventh Doctor decided the Sixth Doctor had to go after Melanie nearly died during *Millennial Rites*. In a fun paradox, a Sixth Doctor driven insane by his successor's actions threatens to take over the Doctor in the future, an event that may well cause the creation of the Valeyard.

Continuing the Doctor's adventures after the end of *The Trial of a Time Lord* was not always going to be the easiest of tasks. After all, with Peri gone and with Melanie still in the Doctor's future, there wasn't really a ready-made companion to share in these new/missing adventures. In an unprecedented move, Virgin allowed the creation of a brand-new companion specifically for the books: Grant Markham, a computer programmer from the colony world Agora, introduced in *Time of Your Life*.



THE SIXTH DOCTOR'S TERROR AT ONE DAY BECOMING THE VALEYARD FUELS MANY OF THE POST-'TRIAL' NOVELS

only reluctantly getting involved in another web of mayhem and intrigue. Tragically, despite his best intentions the Doctor is unable to save the life of young Angela Jennings, and cannot help but use deadly force to stop the crazed android Krilix. It seems that, whatever he tries to do, he cannot escape his destiny. *Killing Ground* takes things one step further when, in a particularly grim moment, the Doctor ponders whether it wouldn't simply be easier to let himself die to prevent the possibility of the Valeyard's creation. Although his later actions convince him that he can still make a positive difference, the Doctor continues to fight the future. In *Business Unusual*, he realises with horror that he's about to meet Melanie Bush, someone he's been avoiding for years in an attempt to prevent the events of *Terror of the Vervoids* coming to pass (as though he needs an excuse), and in *Millennial Rites* he still fears the day when he and Mel will land on the Hyperion III. *Millennial Rites* also features scenes in which the Doctor begins to transform into the Valeyard. The ensuing struggle between the two for control of the Doctor's body is a realisation of what the post-Trial Doctor has been doing all along – battling for control with his darker instincts, suppressing his violent tendencies to prevent the Valeyard's creation.

Craig Hinton's story ties in neatly with a notion

Neurotic and naïve, like a benevolent Turlough, the red-bearded Grant makes a welcome change from the usual Doctor Who companion. The effect of having an all-male TARDIS crew is to make the Doctor seem more vulnerable – with no screaming young girls to protect, or to bully, he is as likely to be a victim as anyone else. This is certainly true of *Killing Ground*, Grant's second and final novel to date, where the Doctor is brutally tortured by the servants of the Cybermen. Meanwhile, getting the sort of character development not generally accorded *Missing Adventure* companions, Grant seriously considers becoming a cyborg to get revenge on the Cybermen responsible for killing his father. Sadly (because Grant is certainly worthy of further exploration), Virgin's loss of the licence brought his travels to an untimely end, and, like a fading rock star, recent appearances have been strictly for charity. The short-story anthology *Perfect Timing* features two memorable Grant episodes: *Wish Upon a Star Beast* by Steve Lyons pits the Doctor and Grant against the terrifying Star Beasts who threaten to take over Santaland, while Ian McIntee's *Schrodinger's Botanist* has a rather more serious intent, with a Doctor unable to cope with the responsibilities of protecting his companions forcing Grant away.

For obvious reasons, authors have been less

willing to set stories during Season Twenty-Two than they have to explore the gap between Seasons Twenty-Three and Twenty-Four. With the onus of having to ensure that any development remains true to the next TV story, it's far more difficult to do interesting things with the characters. On screen, Peri tended to be Tegan with tits: an argumentative colonial whose fashion sense seemed to revolve around the idea that less is more. Sadly, the books have done little to expand on Peri's other assets, and some of the novel authors have been unable to resist exorcising their adolescent fantasies in the most gratuitously explicit way, hence Dave Stone's drooling description of Ms Brown clad in skin-tight PVC. Sadly, Peri remains three-dimensional only in the physical sense; in all other respects, she's the same spoilt child we saw on TV. Most of these stories feature the same tiresome squabbling which made it difficult to understand why Peri would want to travel with a man she appears neither to like nor get on with. *Burning Heart* attempts to answer this question, suggesting that Peri believes something of the Fifth Doctor survives within the Sixth, and that she feels indebted to the Doctor for saving her life at the expense of one of his own.

Perhaps the best book to feature Peri

is Matt Jones' *Bad Therapy*, a novel set some years after the Doctor abandoned his companion to the clutches of Kravos. Gilliam, as she now calls herself, is no longer a whining teenager but a melancholy queen, bitter about her lost youth and tired of her life on Krontep.

The *New Adventures* have also been kind to Melanie, whose guest slot in *Head Games* features a fiery confrontation with the manipulative Seventh Doctor. Her appearances in the *Missing Adventures* have been rather less dramatic. In

the hands of Gary Russell and Craig Hinton, she has become a fun character whose bubbly enthusiasm contrasts favourably with Peri's surly. Though she's still as paper-thin as Bonnie Langford, Melanie is at least likeable and human, and she brings out the best in the Doctor – he's a indulgent uncle to her precocious child. In *The Quantum Archangel* we learn that Melanie considered a career in politics and, in an alternative universe, has become a frighteningly efficient Prime Minister. *Business Unusual*, the obligatory joining story, tells us little that we didn't know already: Melanie is a thoroughly nice person without an ounce of malice in her. She's a truthful, honest and boring as they come, and we love her for it.

That other criticism of the era, an excessive and gratuitous use of continuity, has not been well corrected by the books. Although some, such as Justin Richards' excellent paean to Hammer, *Grave Matter*, and Dave Stone's deeply bizarre *Burning Heart* have managed to get by with nary a reference to the third Silurian from the right, most of the Sixth Doctor novels have shown as much slavish adulation for the series' past as did "Paula Moore".

State of Change is schizophrenic: it's trying to move the Doctor and Peri's relationship forwards, but can't quite escape the pull of their past, as the presence of the Rani and the mutated bird-Peri from *Vengeance* on *Virus* indicates. The *Quantum Archangel* – more of a *Universal Databank* than a proper novel – is positively awash with all manner of pointless references, managing to namecheck the Guardians, the Eternals, the Chronovores, the

GLORY DAYS

The bluffer's guide to the Sixth Doctor's adventures on the printed page ...

BURNING HEART

Written by Dave Stone
Set Between *Vengeance on Voros* and *The Mark of the Rani*
Flesh-eating slugs used as bullets, elephant-launching Piglet People, and a character called Kane. It's a Dave Stone novel. "Nuff said"

MOON GRAFITTI

Written by Dave Stone
Set Between *Vengeance on Voros* and *The Mark of the Rani*
More Dave Stone strangeness with a race of aliens called the Wibbley-Wee [More Short Trips]

GRAVE MATTER

Written by Justin Richards
Set Between *Vengeance on Voros* and *The Mark of the Rani*
Things get deadly serious when the TARDIS arrives in a George Romero movie

TIMESHARE

Written by Vanessa Bishop
Set Between *The Mark of the Rani* and *The Two Doctors*
The Doctor and Peri invest in a timeshare property [Decalog 2]

PLAYERS

Written by Terrance Dicks
Set Between *The Mark of the Rani* and *The Two Doctors*
The shadowy Players manipulate Churchill as the Doctor hobb-nobs with Wallis Simpson

TURNABOUT IS FAIR PLAY

Written by Graeme Burk
Set Between *Timelash* and *Revelation*
After an accident in the TARDIS, the Doctor and Peri switch bodies [Short Trips and Side Steps]

UIGIL

Written by Michael Collier
Set Between *Timelash* and *Revelation of the Daleks*
The Doctor visits an old friend whose daughter is in a coma [Out of the Darkness]

STATE OF CHANGE

Written by Christopher Bulis
Set Between *Revelation of the Daleks* and *The Trial of a Time Lord*
That vixen the Rani passes herself off as Cleopatra, the most beautiful woman in the world. Yeah, Kate, course you could, dear ...

PALACE OF THE RED SUN

Written by Christopher Bulis
Set Between *Revelation of the Daleks* and *The Trial of a Time Lord*
The Doctor and Peri embark on another Christopher Bulis quest story, this time with a teddy bear in tow

THE NIGHTMARE FAIR

Written by Graham Williams
Set Between *Revelation of the Daleks* and *The Trial of a Time Lord*
The Doctor and Peri face the Celestial Toy-maker in B-

THE ULTIMATE EVIL

Written by Wally K Daly
Set Between *Revelation of the Daleks* and *The Trial of a Time Lord*
The Doctor must grapple with the Dwarf Mordant's holiday balls

MISSION TO MAGNUS

Written by Philip Martin
Set Between *Revelation of the Daleks* and *The Trial of a Time Lord*
The Ice Warriors are sowing the seeds

of death on a planet ruled entirely by women

TIME OF YOUR LIFE

Written by Steve Lyons
Set After *The Trial of a Time Lord*
A repentant Doctor gets caught up in violent reality TV. "I'm a Time Lord - Get Me Out of Here!"

HILLING GROUND

Written by Steve Lyons
Set After *The Trial of a Time Lord*
Grant Markham returns to his home planet to discover it overrun by Cybermen. And they're the hands-on-hips variety ...

THE GOLDEN DOOR

Written by David Auger
Set After *The Trial of a Time Lord*
The Sixth Doctor encounters the only incarnation even more crochety than he is, when he meets the First Doctor, Steven and Dodo [Decalog]

WISH YOU WERE HERE

Written by Guy Clapperton
Set After *The Trial of a Time Lord*
The Doctor arrives on the holiday planet from hell [Short Trips]

THE SHADOW IN THE GLASS

Written by Stephen Cole and Justin Richards
Set After *The Trial of a Time Lord*
Hitler's back - and it's about time!

MISSION: IMPRACTICAL

Written by David A McIntee
Set Between *DWM* strips *War Game* and *Fun House*
Comic strip sidekick Frobisher makes his novel debut in this convoluted



addition to McIntee's tedious Tzun/Veltrochni saga

FACE VALUE

Written by Steve Lyons
Set After *The Ultimate Adventure*
In their penultimate adventure, the Doctor, Jason, Crystal and Zog save some tourists from the wrath of a living planet [Short Trips and Side Steps]

GONE TOO SOON

Written by Christopher M. Wadley
Set After *The Trial of a Time Lord*
The Doctor prepares to die. Miserable sod [Short Trips and Side Steps]

BUSINESS UNUSUAL

Written by Gary Russell

Set After *The Trial of a Time Lord*
A third Auton invasion is foiled with the help of the Brigadier and a plucky computer programmer from Pease Postage ...

PEGGUY

Written by Gareth Roberts
Set After *The Trial of a Time Lord*
The Doctor and Mel visit a space auction [Decalog 3]

INSTRUMENTS OF DARKNESS

Written by Gary Russell
Set After *The Trial of a Time Lord*
The Doctor, Evelyn and Mel are pitted against the mysterious Magnate

MILLENNIAL RITES

Written by Craig Hinton
Set After *The Trial of a Time Lord*
[set adds acquaintance be forgot, the Yeti, Anne Travers and the Great Intelligence gather in London for a Millennium knees-up]

THE QUANTUM RACHAGEL

Written by Craig Hinton
Set After *The Trial of a Time Lord*
The Doctor encounters virtually everyone he's ever met when crazed Chronovore Kronos wreaks revenge on the Master

MISSING, PART 1: BUSINESS AS USUAL

Written by Gary Russell
Set After *Drogonfire*
Melanie returns home

MISSING, PART 2: MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE

Written by Robert Perry and Mike Tucker
Set After *Drogonfire*
Mel makes good on her promise to send the Doctor a message in a bottle [More Short Trips]

Nimons, and the Exxilons, among many, many others. It's a shame, because Hinton's previous Sixth Doctor book, the excellent *Millennial Rites*, while acting as a sequel to *The Web of Fear*, was a solid work in its own right. But it isn't just the usual suspects who are guilty of plundering the past. Steve Lyons resurrects the Cybermen, Terrance Dicks sequelises his own *The War Games* and *Blood Harvest* in *Players*, and David A McIntee chooses to make *Mission: Impractical* into another instalment in the interminable Veltrochni saga. While references to the past aren't always a bad thing, if used to the extent they are in the Sixth Doctor's era - when the TARDIS can't land without there being an old enemy lurking behind the bushes - there's something wrong somewhere.

Talking of old allies, the Sixth is the only BBC Doctor not to have encountered the Brigadier at least once during his televised travels (no, *Dimensions in Time* doesn't count). The novels have more than made up for this appalling lapse and there's every indication that the old war horse feels completely at home with this incarnation - the Sixth Doctor's pompous, blustering nature is more than a little similar to a certain velvet-clad predecessor's. It helps that in *Business Unusual* the two are

on familiar territory, battling the Autons in the English countryside. *The Shadow in the Glass*, a book that, against all the odds, gets away with the ropey idea of resurrecting Hitler, is slightly more arcane, although the Brig, as always, takes it in his stride.

The Sixth Doctor novels are also notable for the sheer amount of cross-pollination with comics, audios and stage plays that they contain. Jason, Crystal and Zog from Terrance Dicks' *The Ultimate Adventure* take a curtain call in Steve Lyons' *Face Value*, a tale of a living planet that grows tired of its exploitation by humans. Meanwhile, David A McIntee's *Mission: Impractical*, a book otherwise distinguished only by the author's continuing obsession with Star Trek, features *DWM*'s shape-shifting penguin, Frobisher. Sadly, his appearance is lost among loving descriptions of space battles, Ogron (or Klingon, as it seems to be) culture, and the needless death of loveable rogue Dibber. More understandable is the use of Big Finish companion Evelyn Smythe in Gary Russell's *Instruments of Darkness*. A wonderful character, and the perfect foil for the verbose and theatrical Sixth Doctor, Evelyn is possibly Big Finish's best gift to this incarnation. Her appearance in *Instruments of Darkness* takes place some time after she parted company with the Doctor

following an as-yet-unheard final adventure, and it's satisfying to note that she's lost none of her ability to prick the Doctor's pomposity. What all this cross-referencing does is to create a consistent background against which the Sixth Doctor's continuing adventures unfold. Rather than neatly dividing each line - Evelyn in the audios, Frobisher in the comics and so on - authors have been ready to experiment.

And it's this willingness to be a bit more daring that makes the Sixth Doctor books among the best Doctor Who novels. Partly it boils down to the fact that the authors feel they have little to lose given this Doctor's poor reputation. Partly it's because they feel that Colin Baker was treated appallingly, and his character deserves better. But mainly it's due to that blank slate between *The Trial of a Time Lord* and *Time and the Rani*. With an empty canvas to play with, the authors have enriched the Sixth Doctor's character, finding reasons for his sometimes-unreasonable behaviour onscreen and creating an intriguing and consistent future for him following the abrupt end to his TV adventures. What was a personal tragedy for Colin Baker has become a guilty pleasure for Doctor Who fans. It's unlikely that we'd have had books this fine had his TV era continued. Sorry, Colin, but it seems you were sacrificed for the greater good ...

Further Adventures Comics

While the Doctor concerned himself with grit and gore on the telly, his comic strip counterpart was having one heck of a strange time! Scott Gray steps into a wild world of wizards and Whifferdils, where even the Sixth Doctor's coat seems positively sober by comparison ...

The times were definitely changing for Doctor Who in 1984: a new lead actor, a new 45-minute format and, perhaps most significantly, a shift to a more adult tone for the series. But while the TV show pushed the Sixth Doctor into a grittier, more violent world, the Doctor Who Magazine comic strip cheerfully set off in completely the opposite direction. The DWM Doctor would eschew knives, machine guns and macho mercenaries for a storybook world populated by talking penguins, neurotic robots and naughty magicians. It's a fondly remembered time in the DWM strip's long history, and many people

pseudo-Englishman, spouting dialogue like "There's a good chap" and "Just one short dash and I'm home."

Tarku invades the TARDIS and threatens the Doctor with a variety of humiliating fates unless he hands himself over to malicious industrialist Josiah Dogbolter for a bounty of 250,000 mazumas. The pair quickly join forces, however, and con Dogbolter out of the cash instead. It isn't really explained why the Whifferdill decides to side with the Doctor, thereby earning the anger of one of the galaxy's most powerful figures. But he's 45, armed with a classical education, and he probably just wants to escape his routine job and go see the universe.

With a new Doctor, companion and artist in place, Steve Parkhouse is ready to begin his final, and best, story arc. The Voyager opens with an extraordinary dream sequence: the Doctor finds himself strapped to the wheel of an ancient clipper

gent moment of slapstick here when the Doctor accidentally uses him as a toboggan and ends up colliding with a snowman. The Doctor's dignity is reduced, not to tatters, but to streams of confetti.

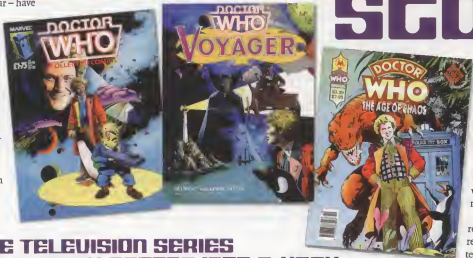
The strip Doctor seems a slightly more innocent fellow than the one seen on television. While he's willing to point a shotgun at Astrolabus, it's only a comical blunderbuss – and when offered a perfect shot by the old man (complete with a bulls-eye painted on his chest), the Doctor becomes embarrassed and admits that he could never actually use the weapon.

Astrolabus casually throws the Doctor into a series of absurdist scenarios which leave the Time Lord unable to trust his own senses. Whether these sequences are caused by hypnotism, reality-warping or good old-fashioned magic is deliberately left unexplained – and are far more effective as a result. Astrolabus is a remarkable adversary, unlike any other opponent the Doctor has ever

The neverending story

– including the series' star – have commented that they would have preferred some of the Doctor's printed adventures to have replaced the ones we saw on screen.

The Colin Baker period of the DWM strip can also be described as the John Ridgway era. Ridgway illustrated all of the Sixth Doctor strips from 1984-87, using the black and white format in a variety of innovative ways. A quintessentially English artist, Ridgway's



faced. One minute he's an elderly lunatic, babbling non sequiturs nineteen to the dozen, the next he's a chillingly serious figure, warning the Doctor that his soul is in peril. He's also capable of breaking the "fourth wall" of fiction – he seems to wish the readers a good-night before he vanishes.

Cast into this mythical realm, the Doctor's sense of reality is put to the severest test. Voyager comments that "logic is a new toy,"

dismissing the Time Lord's trust in science. The story concludes with Voyager demanding that the Doctor recover his star charts – "or you may find your universe has come to an end." The warning is far more dramatic than simply threatening the Doctor with death. Voyager is suggesting that the thing the Doctor holds most dear – his faith in a rational, scientific world – can be destroyed. The Doctor has been swept into a land where two and two will never equal four, and it has terrified him. He hurriedly departs...

Polly the Glot initially seems a far friendlier tale, reintroducing the comical Dr Ivan Asimoff from the Fourth Doctor story The Free-Fall Warriors. Asimoff has fallen in love with Polly, a gigantic creature held captive by the Akkers, the dullest race in the universe. The Doctor has recovered his

WHILE THE TELEVISION SERIES PUSHED THE SIXTH DOCTOR INTO A VERY VIOLENT WORLD, THE DWM COMIC STRIP SENT HIM IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION

delicate textural approach resembled eighteenth century engravings. His flair for design, perspective and composition excited regular writer Steve Parkhouse who played to his strengths, giving him a series of wonderfully eerie landscapes to illustrate. They made an excellent partnership.

The Shape Shifter kicked off the Sixth Doctor's comic strip life in fine fashion, introducing him to Whifferdill private detective/bounty hunter Avan Tarku – who would shortly come to be known as Frobisher. It's interesting to note that while Mr Tarku soon evolves into a wisecracking penguin with an American accent, he begins life as a

ship, sailing to the literal edge of the world. He is helpless before the power of the mysterious Voyager, a self-proclaimed "Lord of Life". The ship goes over an epic waterfall, descending into oblivion. The Doctor is badly shaken by the dream, and he immediately becomes a far more cautious individual than his TV counterpart.

The Doctor and Frobisher travel to the Antarctic where they encounter Astrolabus, a strange old man who has stolen Voyager's star charts. A madcap chase begins, with Astrolabus making his escape on a Leonardo da Vinci-designed flying machine. Frobisher provides a wonderfully indul-

composure and is relaxed, confident that he can deal with the situation. But Astrolabus is connected to this affair as well. When his name is mentioned, the Doctor is suddenly plunged into another terrifying dream – this time he falls into the jaws of a planet-sized incarnation of the old man. It's an awesome sight; one of the most unnerving visuals ever produced in the DWM strip.

The Doctor, Frohisher and Asimoff battle the Akkers (who are so unexcitable they can only go to "grey alert") and face the Defender, a rather insecure robot who leads a deadly arsenal of cleaning tools. Polly is eventually freed but Frohisher is kidnapped by Astrolabus, leading the Doctor into the final chapter of the arc...

Once Upon a Time Lord is Parkhouse's swan-song as the strip's writer. It's a dizzying chase through various realms of fantasy literature, referencing *The Lord of the Rings*, *Turpan* and even *Rupert the Bear* (in a sequence perfectly duplicating the text/picture layout of the original comic). It's made clear now that Astrolabus has no illusions about his own

ASTROLABUS IS A REMARKABLE ROVERSARY, UNLIKE ANY OTHER OPPONENT THE DOCTOR HAS Faced

fictional status. "If I can just make it to the next episode!" he yells, as he flees across a blank page. But his time is up, and the Doctor and Voyager catch him. The true purpose behind this story's self-referential nature becomes plain (at least in hindsight) when a dying Astrolabus asks the Doctor, "How can you know... how long I have been writing your life?" The Doctor solemnly walks away, proclaiming his independence from the man who's been manipulating him for so long. Steve Parkhouse and Astrolabus are both out of his life for good...

While John Ridgway remained as a thankfully consistent presence, the rest of the Sixth Doctor's DWM tenure was divided up by several different writers. Most preferred to steer the strip into more straightforward waters, away from the allegorical tales Parkhouse had explored. The fantasy elements gave way to science fiction concepts, and familiar faces began to appear as the comic strip focused on referencing television continuity – sadly, at the expense of its own.

War-Game, written by former DWM editor Alan McKenzie, has the Doctor and Frohisher travelling to a medieval world where they become caught in the middle of a feud between a Draconian nobleman named Kaon and an evil warlord. Frohisher amusingly transforms into a cross between Conan the Barbarian and Prince Valiant, the hero of Hal Foster's newspaper strip (Foster being one of Ridgway's influences). Kaon dies saving his daughter, ending the story on a sad note.

The next story, Funhouse, is written by "Max Stockbridge" – in reality McKenzie again, working behind a wafer-thin pseudonym. The Doctor and Frohisher land in a strange, deserted house which quickly becomes an ever-changing, surreal place. Unlike the bizarre environments in *The Voyager*, however, this time the mystery is quickly dispelled with a handy explanation – the house is sentient, and is trapped inside the space-time vortex. It attaches itself to the TARDIS in an attempt to escape. There's a humorous moment when the Doctor, clearly in act-first-think-later mode, tries to separate the house from the TARDIS with an axe. Another nod to the TV series is made when the Doctor is forced to travel down his own personal



timeline, briefly changing into each of his previous incarnations.

The TV connection grows even stronger in *Kane's Story*. Peri appears, looking surprisingly happy to see the Doctor. Davros, Daleks and Cybermen are also name-checked as the galaxy faces the threat of the Skeletoids; intelligent spacesuits with a will of their own. A younger version of Kaon pops up, much to our heroes' surprise. The adventure features more impressive visuals from Ridgway, including a stunning full-page image of the Valley of the Gods; a colossal series of Egyptian-style statues. However, the story is hampered by the lack of an intelligent enemy and ends abruptly with a disappointingly simple dust-up.

Exodus opens with some refugees from a drought-stricken world accidentally coming aboard the TARDIS. The Doctor is at his cantankerous best, more than ready to give them the boot, before Peri points out how callously he's acting. A ashamed Doctor supplies the travellers with food and clothing before heading for their world.

At this point Exodus slips into a very familiar story structure. The Doctor is accused of murder but gains the trust of the local law officer (and in record time too). There's then a bit of a whodunnit as the Doctor investigates a series of mysterious deaths in a castle. He learns that a mad scientist has found some advanced technology in a crashed spaceship and is turning people into Cybermen – just

because he can, basically. The stupid old duffer electrocutes himself by mistake and the story ends with the Doctor making a big speech about responsibility. It's all done on such a frustratingly small scale – almost as if the story had to be made on a BBC budget.

Nature of the Beast has the Doctor, Peri and Frohisher going on a picnic trip to a beautiful forest world. The Doctor proceeds to bore his friends silly with old UNIT stories but luckily they're interrupted by a group of futuristic knights pursuing a werewolf. The villain of the piece, Commander Hon, decides to pin the blame for his failure to catch the creature on the Doctor. However, the werewolf is really the Lady Irma, a royal leader transformed by the planet's atmosphere. Hon tries to explode the planet to hide his mistake from his evil warlord boss, but he's the only one who gets blown up. The Doctor rearranges the genetic makeup of Irma's boyfriend

THE AGE OF CHAOS

The longest-ever Doctor Who strip story is also the only one to be written by one of the series' stars. In 1994 Colin Baker was given the chance to create an adventure for his own TV persona in a 92-page special, with the help of artists Barrie Mitchell and John M Burns. *The Age of Chaos* finds the Doctor and Frohisher making their way to the planet Krontep (the homeworld of King Yrcanos from *The Trial of a Time Lord*). Many years have passed since Peri and Yrcanos settled down there, and their beautiful granddaughter Actis is now 16. Actis' belligerent brothers, Artios and Euthys, have brought civil war to the kingdom. The Doctor, Frohisher and the mighty warrior Carl set off on a quest to discover the true source of all the hostility. Carl is an enjoyably loud character, albeit an obvious stand-in for Brian Blessed, bellowing "Wroonnik!" whenever the need arises (and even when it doesn't).

The Doctor and friends naturally face a series of deadly trials as they

journey across Krontep's prehistoric landscape. The most entertaining one is a mirage which shows them their greatest fears: Carl sees himself facing a dishonourable death while Frohisher meets a penguin-eating polar bear.



The Doctor is confronted by a giant green Michael Aspel carrying his *This Is Your Life* book, but he doesn't seem overly worried...

Baker is remarkably generous with the dialogue, allowing Frohisher, not the Doctor, to claim all the best lines.

Stuck in the inevitable dungeon, the Doctor asks him to change into something useful. "Like a master key on legs, you mean?" the penguin replies, before pointing out that such a stunt would be "cheating!" When the villain arrives, Frohisher yells, "I demand to see the Whifferrill ambassador!" It's hinted that the Doctor and Frohisher have been apart for some time before this tale begins, and their relationship has changed. The often story friendship between the two time-travellers seems to have evolved into a more comfortable and equal partnership here.

Mitchell and Burns' artwork is always energetic and colourful (although constricted by annoyingly large word balloons). Their rendition of the Doctor looks to have shed a few pounds since his last appearance, and he's all the happier for it. In fact, the smiling demeanour of the Doctor typifies the good-natured atmosphere of *The Age of Chaos*. The Doctor is clearly having a great deal of fun in this adventure, both on the page and behind the typewriter.



DON'T MESS WITH DOCTOR DREAM

Your guide to the Sixth Doctor's adventures in comic strip land. From Astrolabus to Zyglots, the whole incredible story is here...

• THE SHAPE SHIFTER

Story Steve Parkhouse
Art John Ridgway
Doctor Who Magazine 88-89

• THE VOYAGER

Story Steve Parkhouse
Art John Ridgway
Doctor Who Magazine 90-94

• POLLY THE GLOT

Story Steve Parkhouse
Art John Ridgway
Doctor Who Magazine 95-97

• ONCE UPON A TIME LORD

Story Steve Parkhouse
Art John Ridgway

Doctor Who Magazine 98-99

• WAR-GAMIE

Story Alan McKenzie
Art John Ridgway
Doctor Who Magazine 100-101

• FUNHOUSE

Story Max Stockbridge
Art John Ridgway
Doctor Who Magazine 102-103

• KANE'S STORY

Story Max Stockbridge
Art John Ridgway
Doctor Who Magazine 104-107
Note: The four episodes are titled Kane's Story, Abel's Story, The Warriors' Story and Frohisher's Story

• EXODUS

Story Max Stockbridge
Art John Ridgway
Doctor Who Magazine 108-110
Note: The three episodes are titled Exodus, Revelation and Genesis

• NATURE OF THE BEAST

Story Simon Furman
Art John Ridgway
Doctor Who Magazine 111-113

• TIME BOMB

Story Jamie Delano
Art John Ridgway
Doctor Who Magazine 114-116

• SALAD DAZE



Story Simon Furman
Art John Ridgway
Doctor Who Magazine 117

• CHARGES

Story Grant Morrison
Art John Ridgway
Doctor Who Magazine 118-119

• PROFITS OF DOOM!

Story Mike Collins

Art John Ridgway
Doctor Who Magazine 120-122

• THE GIFT

Story Jamie Delano
Art John Ridgway
Doctor Who Magazine 123-126

• THE WORLD SHAPERS

Story Grant Morrison
Art John Ridgway & Tim Perkins
Doctor Who Magazine 127-129

• UP ABOVE THE GODS

Story Richard Alan
Art Lee Sullivan
Doctor Who Magazine 127

• COLLECTED COMICS

A Marvel UK Doctor Who graphic novel reprinting the strips from DWM 88-89 and 95-97 with colour by Gina Hart

• VOYAGER

A Marvel UK Doctor Who graphic novel reprinting the strips from DWM 88-89 with colour by Gina Hart

a plague of self-replicating robots on the planet. The Doctor travels to Zazz's moon to discover their origin and some time is spent detailing exactly how the robots achieve a form of sentient evolution in a fascinating, and completely logical, 12,000-year procedure.

The Kool Katz of Zazz are helpless as the robots dismantle their city, but the Doctor has the answer. Emulating the Pied Piper of Hamelin, he devises a tune that lures the robots into a volcano-powered space rocket which takes them home to the moon. The Gift is one of the most successful Sixth Doctor strip stories, managing to place a valid science fiction concept right in the middle of an absolutely preposterous setting. Crazy, man!

It's been observed that the Sixth Doctor's final television adventure was lumbered with an overly complicated, continuity-laden storyline. Sadly, his last comic strip tale follows suit. The World Shapers sees writer Grant Morrison proudly exposing his anorak with a story hopelessly tangled in the TV series' history. The Doctor and co travel to Marinus (The Keys of Marinus) where they find a dying Time Lord who's reached his final regeneration (The Deadly Assassin). A reference

Doctor and Davros. The villain is being held captive inside the TARDIS, and takes the chance to point out that the Doctor is a flawed, hypocritical individual (with the Doctor, surprisingly, agreeing). But no new insights on the characters' relationship are made, and it's all over a bit too quickly for the encounter to hold any real resonance. A missed opportunity.

Sadly, missed opportunities abound in this period of the DWM comic strip. Too many of the



the DWM Doctor isn't really a different character – he's still an overbearing so-and-so in most of these stories. So just how does he manage to be ten times more agreeable on paper than he ever was on screen?

Think of Kelsey Grammer's sitcom psychiatrist Frasier Crane, and the characteristics he shares with the Sixth Doctor: he's highly intelligent, snobbish, pompous, loud and arrogant – so why do we like him so much? Because when Frasier can overcome his own ego, we see that he genuinely wants to help people – but more importantly, he has a very endearing habit of always falling flat on his face at the worst possible moment, enabling us to sympathise with him.

This is the key to the Sixth Doctor that the TV series missed but the comic strip pinpointed. When the strip Doctor gets attacked by an insane robot, he's bopped by a mop, not a truncheon; his toy battleship shoots at him when he's in the bath; he's forced to chase his enemy on a merry-go-round. He looks silly. Undermining the character's dignity – in effect, reducing him to our own mundane level – is crucial to his appeal.

Yes, if the TV folk had just given the Doctor a crazy penguin for a friend and made him fall into a snowman once in a while, we would have loved him to death!

'THE GIFT' MANAGES TO PLACE A VALID SCI-FI CONCEPT IN THE MIDDLE OF A QUITE PREPOSTEROUS SETTING!

to "Planet 14" triggers a distant memory, prompting the Doctor to go and ask Jamie (The Two Doctors) about it. An older Jamie recalls the Cyber-Controller mentioning it (The Invasion). Jamie reveals that he was able to resist the Time Lords' memory wipe (The War Games). They return to Marinus to discover that it's really Planet 14, but it's turning into Mondas (The Tenth Planet), and the Voord are really Cybermen! Jamie sacrifices himself to stop the Cyber-Voord, but a couple of smug Time Lords later inform us that they'll become very nice in five million years' time. Well, fancy that!

The Sixth Doctor returned to DWM for one further story eight years later. Up Above the Gods is a one-parter featuring a conversation between the

post-Parkhouse stories focused on recreating the look and feel of the TV series without exploiting the many advantages the comics medium has to offer. The Fourth and Fifth Doctors had enjoyed epic adventures in the Marvel strip with casts of thousands, fleets of spacecraft and worlds swarming with exotic creatures. More often than not, the Sixth Doctor found himself trudging through familiar corridors and low-rent dungeons, encountering characters who could have been cast straight out of Spotlight.

Even so, the Sixth Doctor's comic strip adventures are regarded by many fans as superior to his televised ones, with his characterisation being singled out as one of the main strengths. And yet



*"I have never once
regretted my involvement
with Doctor Who..."*



next year, 2003, will be *Doctor Who*'s fortieth anniversary; it will also mark the twentieth anniversary of my benefiting from a local outbreak of spectrox toxæmia and, as a result, appalling fans of sweet effeteness nationwide, by replacing those characteristics with something that, on first acquaintance, promised to be a little less user-friendly. I applauded the courage of my dear and greatly missed friend, John Nathan-Turner, in deciding to tease the audience with a sixth incarnation whose personality and behaviour initially appeared very un-Doctor-like.

Readers of this magazine will know how events unfolded subsequently to thwart best-laid plans ...

Despite the disappointment of my early bath, I have never regretted my involvement with a programme that, despite having been off the air for 13 years, still commands more worldwide devotion and love than the majority of series made more recently. And I have derived enormous satisfaction over the last three years, bringing old Sixie back into the fray through the excellent Big Finish audios. If the scripts continue to be as innovative and exciting as they have thus far, I may yet achieve that fate-tempting ambition of Doctor longevity – in stories, if not years!

Thank you all for watching – and listening!

Colin Baker
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